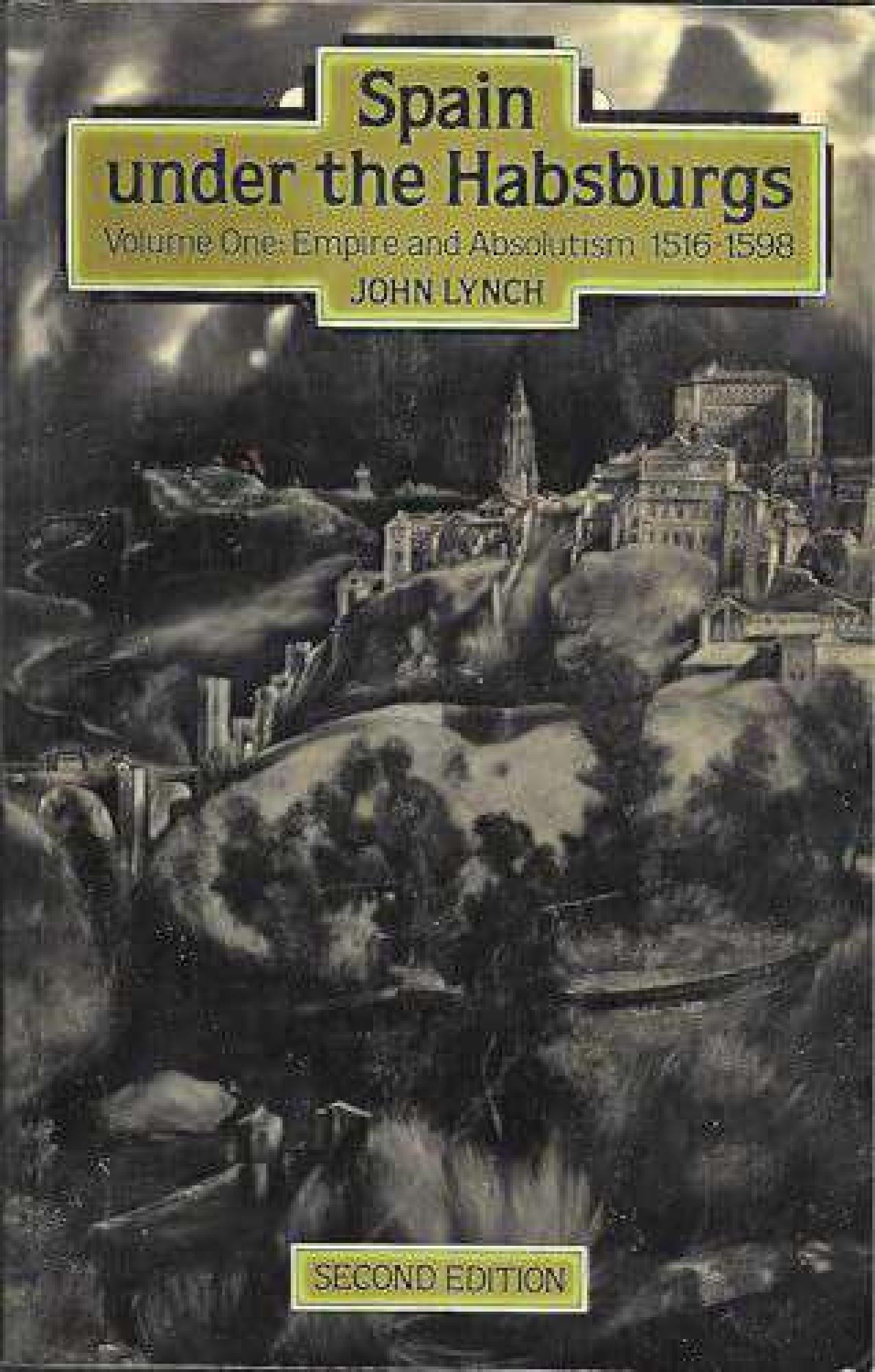
Spain under the Habsburgs

Volume One: Empire and Absolutism 1516-1598

JOHN LYNCH



SECOND EDITION

SPAIN UNDER THE HABSBURGS

Second Edition

JOHN LYNCH

VOLUME ONE

EMPIRE AND ABSOLUTISM

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The present edition differs from the first in a number of ways. Recent research has extended our knowledge and improved our understanding of early modern Spain, and I have sought to incorporate the results in the new text. Sections of both volumes have been re-written in the light of works published between 1965 and 1980, in some cases to add new material, in others to modify an argument or revise an interpretation. Yet I have not wished to alter the essential framework and character of the book, if that were possible, nor have I changed the hypotheses and speculations which were inherent in it and which belong to the unfinished debate on the rise and fall of Habsburg Spain. I have added a bibliography of recent works, describing the trends in the historiography of the subject in the last fifteen years and indicating the most important advances which have been made. Most of the maps have been re-drawn, and there is a new selection of illustrations.

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE present work is the first of a projected two-volume history of Spain from 1516 to 1700. It is written in the belief that recent research, mainly by Spanish and French historians, has yielded new information sufficient to justify a reappraisal of the period, and in the hope that the story of Spain's rise to world power and her subsequent decline can be made intelligible in spite of the persisting gaps in our knowledge. Without neglecting political issues, I have tried to do justice to economic and social forces, on which there is now more material than there was twenty years ago, and also to the fundamental factors of religion and relations between church and state. The history of Spain is often distorted by looking at it solely from the point of view of Castile and in terms of Castilian problems; therefore, while the dominant position of Castile has to be recognised for what it was—superiority in manpower and resources—I have also paid some attention to the equally Spanish but distinctive regions of Catalonia and Aragon. The history of Spanish America, of course, is another story, and I have not attempted to tell it here; but the economy and the policy of Spain would be incomprehensible without reference to her possession of a colonial empire, and it is in this context that I have treated the Spanish Indies, viewing them mainly as instruments of wealth and power. There seemed little point in providing a distilled version of the cultural history of Spain's Golden Age, a subject in which the reader is already well served, but it is hoped that the book provides a historical framework useful to the student of literature.

I should like to record my gratitude to those who have helped me in the writing of this book, to Professor R. A. Humphreys, who kindly read the manuscript and helped me to improve it, to Mr. A. N. Ryan, who scrutinised many of its pages and gave me the benefit of his advice, to Dr. J. S. Cummins, who provided me with bibliographical information and with assistance in points of translation, and to the University of Liverpool, whose generous grants in aid of research enabled me to study Spanish history in Spain itself. Above all, I wish to thank my wife, who has given me not only advice on the book but also the conditions in which it could be written.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON
May, 1963

J.L.

CHAPTER I

THE HABSBURG INHERITANCE

1. The Union of the Crowns

On 19 October 1469 Isabella, heiress to the throne of Castile, married Ferdinand, son and heir of John II of Aragon. It was hardly a love-match, though the nineteen-year-old bride, plain and not strikingly feminine, grew fond enough of her husband to be jealous of his numerous infidelities. Equally it was not a dynastic arrangement imposed on them from above. Ignoring the opposition of her brother, the reigning monarch Henry IV, and resisting Portuguese, French, and English suitors, Isabella decided by herself alone to marry Ferdinand and won her way only by great determination and political sense and with a national consciousness that was rare among her contemporaries. On the fragile foundations of the marriage Spain's future was to be built. Inheriting distinct and mutually hostile kingdoms, shattered by social and political strife, Ferdinand and Isabella left to their Habsburg successors the makings of a nation state, ~~united,~~ peaceful, and powerful beyond any in Europe.

In 1469 few would have rated their prospects so highly. As they were related by consanguinity and had married without papal approval—though with a dispensation forged in Spain—canonically they were living in sin and soon they were excommunicated. They had to reckon, moreover, with the savage hostility of Henry IV, who resented Aragonese intrigues among his own rebellious subjects and favoured a Castilian alliance with Portugal or France; and there was some support for the succession rights of Henry's daughter, Joanna, whose legitimacy was disputed but whom Henry himself declared his heir. Driven as rebels from Castile, the young couple could hope for little from Aragon. John II, it is true, had encouraged their marriage, in the hope of improving his own position which was threatened by the rebellion of Catalonia and the hostility of France, but his preoccupations in both these directions prevented him from giving them much practical assistance. But even should they survive to claim their inheritance, what was it worth? Civil wars had reduced both kingdoms to conditions of ruinous anarchy. In a ten years' war with its king (1462–72) Catalonia had weakened the crown of Aragon, reinforced its own economic decline, and lost part of its territory to France. In Castile, where civil war lasted even longer (1464–80), a rampant

aristocracy not only evaded the crown but controlled it; in the person of the degenerate Henry IV, nicknamed 'the Impotent' (hence the dispute over Joanna's right of succession), and kicked in effigy from the throne by a group of rebel nobles headed by the archbishop of Toledo, royal authority could sink no lower. With only their wits to assist them, Ferdinand and Isabella rode the storms of peninsular politics and survived to secure the legitimisation of their marriage, the throne of Castile on the death of Henry IV in 1474, and the union of the crowns of Castile and Aragon when Ferdinand succeeded his father in 1479. Only Navarre and Granada remained outside the union, the former a satellite of France, the latter an independent Moorish kingdom. Portugal—whose king had married Joanna, upheld her rights, and still aspired to draw Castile away from the eastern kingdoms of the peninsula—was beaten off in the battle of Toro in 1476.

The dominions of the Catholic Monarchs—a title later given to them by their Borgia protégé, Pope Alexander VI—now possessed a joint government under the same dynasty.[1] As Spain lacked a tradition of unity and the institutions to give it expression, the success of this government depended on the willingness of the two sovereigns to co-operate. By the Agreement of Segovia (1475) Isabella assumed the internal government of Castile, with Ferdinand specialising in foreign affairs and both participating in the administration of justice. But formal agreement was less important than the personal understanding which infused their relations. Each intervened actively in the affairs of the other's kingdoms, sometimes together, sometimes separately, but usually in agreement.[2] Isabella disliked being spoken of alone, and the habit of referring to all their decisions and actions as those of 'the King and Queen' led the chronicler, Hernando del Pulgar, to satirise the much-worked formula by heading an imaginary chapter of his history of the reign 'On such and such a day the King and Queen gave birth to a daughter'. But in fact their instinctive political sympathy, together with their willingness to take advice from each other, make it difficult on any given occasion to assign ideas or policy

[1] The reign of Ferdinand and Isabella still awaits an adequate history. Traditional Spanish accounts of Isabella are panegyric in form; the best example of these is C. Silió Cortés, *Isabel la Católica. Fundadora de España* (Madrid, 1954). R. B. Merriman, *The Rise of the Spanish Empire in the Old World and the New* (4 vols., New York, 1918–34), vol. ii, is still useful as a political narrative. The rule of Ferdinand has been better served, especially in the authoritative works of J. Vicens Vives, *Política del Rey Católico en Cataluña* (Barcelona, 1940); *Fernando el Católico, príncipe de Aragón, rey de Sicilia 1458–1478* (Madrid, 1952); *Instituciones económicas, sociales y políticos de la época fernandina* (Zaragoza, 1952); see also *Juan II de Aragón (1398–1479)* (Barcelona, 1953). For an indication of the present state of research see *Fernando el Católico Vida y obra*, V Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón (*Estudios*, I, Zaragoza, 1955).

[2] See A. de la Torre, 'Fernando el Católico, Gobernante', *Fernando el Católico. Vida y obra*, pp. 9–19.

to one or the other; the only criterion for action was the search for the best solutions to their mutual problems.

Consequently, the emergence of Castile as the dominant partner in the union was not due to a narrow nationalism, but had the fullest support of Ferdinand—a measure of the king's realism, not of the queen's prejudice. Geographically, Castile had the advantage of a central position, its territory was three times as large as that of Aragon and its component states, Catalonia and Valencia, and with six million out of a total of seven million inhabitants it was clearly superior in manpower. These facts, combined with the poverty of the eastern states, naturally gave Castile the leading rôle in the union and made it the base of the crown's operations, the more so as its laws and institutions did not restrain royal action by the kind of checks which existed in the eastern kingdoms. The king of Aragon, therefore, raised no objection to Castilian supremacy; if anything, he worked for it with a greater sense of urgency than Isabella herself. In the marriage pact he had sworn to reside always in Castile and not to leave without agreement of his wife. His own kingdoms he ruled through viceroys, and from 1494 with the assistance of the Council of Aragon—a new institution which, in spite of being composed exclusively of representatives of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia, resided always in Castile, under the direct influence of the crown and the court.

The supremacy of Castile was reflected also in the expansion of her language and the renaissance of her culture. Castilian was already the written language of the Basques. The literary use of Galician virtually ceased from the fifteenth century. Catalan, the most robust of the non-Castilian languages, survived at a popular level and even as an official language, but as a literary medium it retreated rapidly before the language of Castile. In Catalonia and even more in Valencia Castilian became more widely used by men of letters, and it was in Castilian that the literature of Spain's golden age flowered so brilliantly. But the influence of language did not stop there. It was also regarded as an instrument of political expansion, as can be seen in the thought of one of the most distinguished figures of the Spanish renaissance, the humanist and philologist, Antonio de Nebrija. In the eloquent prologue of his Castilian grammar, dedicated to Queen Isabella, Nebrija expressed his conviction that 'language was always the instrument of empire'. With an inspired sense of timing, on the eve of the discovery of America, he reflected the surging patriotism of his contemporaries: 'When your Highness has subjected many barbarous peoples and nations of foreign tongues . . . they will have to accept the laws which the conqueror imposes on the conquered, and with them our language.' But Castilian, he believed, would be learnt—with the help of his grammar—not only by subject peoples but also by 'the

Basques, the Navarrese, the French, the Italians, and all others who have any traffic and communication with Spain'.[3] Within the peninsula, at least, the tendency was already strong, and there the language of Castile was the language of authority and as such an instrument of unification.

In so far as a sense of nationalism existed in Spain at the time, it was Castilian rather than Spanish in inspiration, as is evident in the thought of Nebrija. But even in this limited sense Nebrija was probably precocious. Most of the subjects of the Catholic Monarchs still thought of themselves as Castilians, Aragonese, Catalans, and Basques, rather than as Spaniards. From one point of view they had no alternative. Ferdinand and Isabella gave Spain a common government but not a common administration. The union of the crowns was personal, not institutional; each kingdom preserved its identity and its laws. In spite of their title, 'Kings of Castile, of León, of Aragon, of Sicily', Ferdinand and Isabella were each primarily sovereigns of their own particular kingdoms rather than monarchs of Spain, a fact which was to become only too apparent on the death of Isabella, when Ferdinand had to leave Castile and the two kingdoms briefly returned to a separate existence. Institutional differences were expressed in the different systems of law and in the different cortes, or parliaments, those of Castile and those of Aragon; even within the crown of Aragon there were separate cortes for its component states, for Catalonia and Valencia as well as for Aragon proper. Within the crown of Castile, in addition to the law of Castile there was the law of the Basque provinces, which also had their own customs régime, and, after the annexation of Navarre in 1512, the law of Navarre. These divisions were reinforced by customs barriers between the constituent kingdoms which were just as effective as those between themselves and foreign countries. The union of the crown, therefore, was only the beginning of the unification of Spain. The task of assimilating and integrating the various states remained, and in pursuing it Ferdinand and Isabella were more vacillating and less absolutist than is often supposed. Nevertheless, whatever hope there was for the permanent unity of Spain, as opposed to a temporary dynastic alliance, lay in the constancy with which the monarchs did pursue it. For unity was not a condition natural to the inhabitants of Spain. The lead had to come from above. In support of a common policy, it is true, Ferdinand and Isabella could draw on the joint resources of their various states, especially those of Castile which possessed the most effective instrument of unification—a monarchy potentially absolute, untrammelled by representative institutions, and ready to dispute the power of the nobility. This gave them the means of

[3] A. de Nebrija, *Gramática de la lengua castellana* (1492), ed. I. González-Llubera (Oxford, 1926), pp. 3–9. On the expansion of Castilian see R. Menéndez Pidal, *La lengua de Cristóbal Colón* (Buenos Aires, 1942), pp. 52–71.

forming a national state, and ultimately an empire. But those means had to be organised and their subjects pushed in new and unaccustomed directions. And first they had to impose their authority in Castile.

To rescue the crown from disputing factions and restore the basic conditions of law and order, Ferdinand and Isabella had to take issue with the most powerful of their subjects. By the fifteenth century the Castilian aristocracy, monopolising the fruits of the reconquest of Spain from the Moors—land and office—had grown powerful enough to make itself an independent authority, changing dynasties, possessing itself of royal land, and using the resultant power as an instrument of its own irresponsible ambitions. The monarchs, therefore, sought to increase their own power by reducing that of the aristocracy. Reluctant to innovate, they used the agencies with which their subjects were already familiar. One of them, the *hermandades*, or police forces organised by many towns, had already proved its worth in the lawless times of Henry IV.[4] This they reorganised into the *Santa Hermandad* (Holy Brotherhood), forced everyone to contribute to its expenses including —and this was an innovation—the nobility and the clergy, and brought it under control of the crown by means of a royal council, the *Consejo de la Hermandad* (1476). The *Santa Hermandad* played a vital rôle in the reduction of the nobility and the pursuit of criminals, whatever their status. But more direct action was needed to curb an aristocracy pampered by generations of royal indulgence. Therefore, feudal castles were destroyed, private wars were declared illegal, the *adelantados*, or frontier governors, were displaced, and the great officers of the crown were reduced to precise and limited functions and deprived of all influence in government and the formulation of policy. At the same time, royal land, recklessly alienated in the past, was recovered and extended, and the crown began to compete with its own subjects in wealth and in the power which wealth gave. The Masterships of the Military Orders, which had been one of the principal sources of disorder, were incorporated in the crown and ruled by another royal council, the *Consejo de las Ordenes* (1495). Above all, the administration of justice was gradually reformed by strengthening the royal courts at the expense of feudal ones. The *audiencia*, or high court of justice, frequently presided over by the monarchs themselves, became the supreme judicial body, and with the establishment of minor *audiencias* in local districts royal justice made deeper inroads on the private law of feudal lords. Justice was no longer for sale, as in the corrupt reign of Henry IV, but was impartially and inexorably applied.

Before the reign of the Catholic Monarchs the crown had been unable to escape aristocratic control by allying itself with the towns, for many of the

[4] L. Suárez Fernández, 'Evolución histórica de las hermandades castellanas', *Cuadernos de Historia de España*, xvi. (1951), 5–78.

latter were already partisans or subordinates of the aristocracy. By the middle of the fifteenth century, however, townspeople were weary of feudal anarchy. Conscious of the practical inconvenience of disorder, civil war, and rupture of normal communications, they were ready for a lead. The first *hermandades* were urban movements, and it was municipal anxiety for peace, security, and resumption of trade which provided one of the most favourable conditions for the success of the royal programme. But Ferdinand and Isabella had no intention of rescuing the crown from the aristocracy merely to subordinate it to the towns. Many of the latter still retained the privileges they had been granted when they were frontier posts in the wars against the Moors, and, with them, the memory of past independence. This the crown sought to erase. By use of the *corregidores*, royal officials sent for the first time in 1480 to all Castilian towns and converted into a permanent institution, the Catholic Monarchs closely controlled municipal life in Castile.[5] The office was also imposed on Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, and with it the central authority began the policy of inserting royal officials into the semi-autonomous regions of the periphery. Although it could not introduce these powerful agents into Aragon-Catalonia, it was able to reduce the independence of municipal corporations there by initiating the *régimen insaculatorio*, whereby office-holders were drawn from lists of suitable candidates, that is from those well disposed to the crown, which reserved the right to revise elections. The towns themselves were the more ready to acquiesce in royal policy as they benefited from the improvement of administration and even more from the restoring of municipal finances, credit, and trade.[6]

Measures which in Castile were simply designed to strengthen royal authority looked more like a policy of denationalisation when applied to the eastern kingdoms. And Ferdinand's policy of improving the position of the crown in Catalonia was not confined to municipal affairs and local government. With a sense of unity more pronounced than that of Isabella, he was anxious to assimilate his kingdoms to those of Castile. He encouraged the intermarriage of Catalan and Castilian noble families, appointed Castilian churchmen to important benefices in Catalonia, and on occasion—against the constitutions—filled Catalan offices with Castilians. He even took the policy to an institutional level, admitting the Spanish Inquisition to Aragon and Catalonia. Yet this was the only institution common to both crowns, and the protests with which it was received in the eastern kingdoms were a sign of their sensitivity to encroachments on their independence, and a

[5] F. Albi, *El corregidor en el municipio español bajo la monarquía absoluta* (Madrid, 1943); R. S. Chamberlain, 'The Corregidor in Castile in the Sixteenth Century', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, xxiii. (1943), 222–57.

[6] See J. Vicens Vives, *Ferran II i la ciutat de Barcelona, 1479–1516* (3 vols., Barcelona, 1936–37).

warning perhaps to Castile not to overstep the mark. Ferdinand himself did not do so. He saw no reason to modify his pluralist conception of the Spanish monarchy, and his intervention in Catalonia brought political and economic reform rather than a general despoliation of its liberties. In view of the poverty of the eastern kingdoms in manpower and resources there was little temptation to attack their institutions or to subject them to a rigid centralisation. From the Catholic Monarchs, therefore, the Habsburgs were to inherit not a monolithic régime but a variegated and decentralised one, a personal union of independent states.

The anarchic condition of Spanish society on the eve of the new order was reflected in the state of the church. Like the crown it had lost prestige and property in the civil wars of the mid-fifteenth century, in which its most powerful members had participated on one side or the other for reasons that had little to do with religion; and like the aristocracy it reacted vehemently to any attack on its privileges, especially its exemption from taxation. The behaviour of many of the higher clergy was indistinguishable from that of the aristocracy, whence they usually came; and a warrior-bishop, like Archbishop Carrillo of Toledo, was not an exceptional figure. The monastic orders with few exceptions—notably the Carthusians and Franciscan Observants—had abandoned their original discipline, and their monasteries were often little more than places of diversion. When the Catholic Monarchs undertook to reform the religious orders, many of their members had to be forcibly expelled from their houses; the Dominicans of Salamanca defended themselves with arms. The condition of the secular clergy was even worse. Products of the existing system, which made virtually no provision for the training of priests, they were often completely unprepared for the performance of their duties; in 1473 the Council of Aranda had to order the clergy to celebrate Mass at least four times a year. In periods of decline, of course, it is usually the vices of the clergy which receive publicity while their virtues are ignored. The Spanish church was not devoid of piety and integrity, and standards were preserved among the middle groups of bishops, abbots and canons. The Catholic Monarchs, therefore, had material on which to work, and with the collaboration of Cardinal Ximénez de Cisneros they were able to begin the long-needed task of reform, an essential feature of which was careful selection of candidates for preferment. For this reason, as well as in the interests of their own sovereignty, they were anxious to reduce the jurisdiction of Rome. In ecclesiastical as in secular affairs they were determined to control as well as to reform, and it was in their reign that the independence of the Spanish church was undermined and its relations with Rome carefully circumscribed. In order to control the Spanish clergy they sought to establish nomination to benefices by the crown and not by

the papacy. After a struggle they obtained from Sixtus IV the right to petition in favour of their candidates for all the major ecclesiastical benefices in Spain, with an understanding that the candidates presented by the crown would in fact be the ones appointed by Rome.[7] And even this extensive right was gradually extended to more and more benefices. Yet the concern of the Catholic Monarchs for religion can be exaggerated. They had little appreciation of the wider problems of the church; the papacy earned little prestige from the pontificate of Alexander VI, a Spanish Borgia elected with the active support of Ferdinand and Isabella. Even within Spain reasons of state sometimes took precedence over the needs of the church; Ferdinand, who had to find sinecures for the numerous illegitimate children with whom he littered the country, made one of them, Alonso de Aragón, archbishop of Zaragoza, whose own illegitimate son succeeded him in the see.

The reduction of the three estates—nobility, clergy, and towns—naturally involved the reduction of the institution in which they had been traditionally represented, the cortes.[8] In Castile this was no problem, for its cortes were utterly dependent on the crown, which controlled their composition and even the right of representation, and summoned or ignored them at its will. While they had the right to petition, they had no legislative power. In Castile the power to make laws had always rested exclusively in the crown. New laws did not require the assent of the cortes unless they contradicted an older law; according to an ordinance of 1387 the crown could not revoke a valid law without the consent of the cortes, but its legislative power was otherwise unlimited. The financial power of the cortes was no greater; it was understood that before taking extraordinary revenue the crown should consult the cortes, and this was written into law at the cortes of Valladolid in 1307; but even this limited function was weakened by the exemption of the nobility and the church from taxation and the crown's possession of alternative means of supply, both of which factors isolated the towns and weakened any opposition they cared to make. The cortes of Castile were thus quite unable to make redress of grievances precede supply of money, and thereby lacked any bargaining device *vis-à-vis* the crown. Yet they could be useful as a means of reaching public opinion, and in the early years of their reign Ferdinand and Isabella sought their collaboration, or that of

[7] T. de Azcona, *La elección y reforma del episcopado español en tiempo de los Reyes Católicos* (Madrid, 1960).

[8] See R. B. Merriman, 'The Cortes of the Spanish Kingdoms in the Later Middle Ages', *American Historical Review*, xvi. (1910–11), 476–95; M. Colmeiro, *Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y de Castilla: Introducción* (Madrid, 1883); for an indication of recent studies see 'Recent Works and Present Views on the Origins and Development of Representative Assemblies', *Relazioni del X Congresso Internazionale di Scienze Storiche*, i. (Florence, 1955), 58–63.

the third estate, in their campaign against the nobility. Later, when their assistance was no longer required, they were ignored, infrequently summoned, and their composition was restricted to representatives of the towns, only eighteen of which were granted rights of representation.

In the states of the crown of Aragon the cortes possessed more authentic privileges and greater means of evading government control. Those of Aragon consisted of four estates, nobles, gentry, clergy, and towns, and although their summoning was a royal prerogative, the right to attend was fixed and did not, as in Castile, depend on royal writ. Unlike the Castilian monarch, the king of Aragon could not legislate without the cortes, nor could he impose any new tax without their consent.[9] And even during the intervals between meetings of cortes the crown could not escape their attention, for they left in session a *Diputación del Reyno*, or committee of estates, to supervise the observance of laws by public officials and private persons and to oversee the administration of public revenue. The cortes of Catalonia and Valencia were basically similar to those of Aragon. The Catalan body consisted of three estates, with about twelve towns represented in the third; no legislation could be made without their consent, no new taxes could be imposed without their voting them, and in the concluding session the king was obliged to swear to measures which the cortes had passed before they granted him the subsidy; and after the cortes had risen a committee of estates, the *Diputación General del Reyno*, similar to that of Aragon, performed a watch-dog function. More powerful than those of Castile, the cortes of Catalonia were probably more efficient than those of Aragon. But all the cortes of the eastern kingdoms were potentially instruments of opposition to the crown. Yet, interested as he was in restoring royal authority, Ferdinand did not challenge their privileges. He introduced the device of sending official lists from which the representatives of the towns had to be chosen; otherwise he left them structurally intact.

The immunity of the eastern kingdoms to the absolute power of the crown, especially in taxation and conscription, an immunity which lasted throughout the Habsburg period, is usually explained in purely constitutional terms and attributed to the legal apparatus with which they could defend themselves, unlike the helpless realms of Castile. Certainly the institutions of Aragon and Catalonia were more robust than those of Castile and the power of their monarch less absolute. It is also true that the joint crowns accepted the conditions of their union—that the component parts of the new Spain retain their identity and their laws. In any case, Ferdinand and Isabella had no desire

[9] Much has been made of the fact that absolute unanimity was required before any measures could be passed. But this was largely theoretical; in practice the rule of majority vote prevailed.

to provoke further civil wars by headlong clashes with traditional interests. But institutions do not explain everything. The question still remains—why was the crown content to be less absolute in Aragon than it was in Castile? And why did the protective institutions of the former survive even in new conditions, while those of Castile were rendered yet more impotent? The answer to this must be sought in the economic and social conditions of each kingdom.

Of the two regions Castile was richer in manpower and in taxable wealth; only there could the crown find in sufficient quantity the two basic instruments of power—recruits for its army and money for its treasury. For the social structure of Castile, containing as it did a large peasant population, much of which lived in conditions of disguised unemployment near starvation level, provided a ready surplus for the recruitment of troops; and the wealth of Castile, which was shortly to be primed with the income from America, enabled taxpayers to meet the growing demands of the state. The crown, therefore, had a compelling reason for seeking direct access to both men and money and for removing any obstacles in its path. In Aragon-Catalonia, on the other hand, the resources available were little more than useful additions to what the crown already possessed in Castile. As these kingdoms had little to offer so they had little to protect and the crown had few reasons for breaking the protective barriers. Had the eastern kingdoms been richer in resources, then it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that their institutions would have suffered the same fate as those of Castile. For any absolute monarchy intent on building a state and increasing its power is forced to make direct contract with its subjects, and if the crown of Spain had been deprived of essential power in its periphery kingdoms then it would have been forced to take issue with them. As it was, with power enough in Castile, the risk was not worth taking. Aragon and Catalonia were saved from the more extreme forms of absolute government by their poverty, and their immunity survived with the permission of the crown. The proof of this lies in the fact that when it was necessary the crown had no hesitation in imposing its will, even in the face of resistance. In the Catalan cortes of 1510 the representatives of Barcelona opposed the grant of subsidy on constitutional grounds, because the king had not given satisfaction to their demands; Ferdinand promptly ordered the recall of the Barcelona representatives and this was enough to bring them to heel. Later in the century, faced with opposition in Aragon, Philip II was to test the validity of its liberties even more searchingly. And it was not until the seventeenth century, precisely when Castile had reached the end of its resources, that the central government attempted to break the immunities of the eastern kingdoms in order to tap their manpower and money.

The cortes, then, were not a regular or essential part of government. This rôle was filled by the royal councils, headed by the Council of Castile, whose growing legislative as well as judicial and consultative functions reduced the significance of the cortes still further. The Catholic Monarchs reorganised the Council of Castile into a more efficient agency of administration, and added new councils to specialise in different areas (such as the Council of Aragon) or in different departments of government (such as the Council of Military Orders), staffing them with a core of professional lawyers and centralising the work of government on lines which lasted throughout the period of the Habsburgs. But to impose the authority of the state by means of officials—and its army—cost money; consequently the reorganisation undertaken by the crown presupposed its possession of greater financial power. The recovery of royal lands was not enough; it was also urgent to reorganise taxes, improve their collection and to provide for their administration at the centre. In these matters reform began in 1480 with the creation within the Council of Castile of a department of finance headed by an assiduous Asturian, Alonso de Quintanilla. With more effective direction from above, and collectors posted to all parts of the kingdom, revenue increased spectacularly—from 800,000 maravedis in 1470 to twenty-two millions in 1504. But this was due essentially to better administration under peaceful conditions and not to any reform of taxation itself, which retained its traditional structure. The immunities of nobility and clergy were preserved, with the result that the tax-paying sections of the community were subject to ever-increasing demands. The *alcabala*, a tax on mercantile transactions, was retained, together with the whole range of taxes inherited from the middle ages. The only uniform contribution was the *cruzada*, or crusade subsidy, obtained by the Catholic Monarchs from the pope for the war of Granada and providing a fruitful and permanent income from then onwards. Traditional customs duties were continued, though they also yielded more as trade improved in post-war conditions.

In giving Spain its state apparatus the Catholic Monarchs, operating from Castile and accepting the constitutional limitations of the union they had forged, liquidated the past and provided a basis on which their successors could build a national state. In the administrative sphere their work was creative and decisive, and to Castile, if not to the entire amalgam of their possessions, they left a government which had been centralised and reformed and was increasingly obeyed. By the end of the reign Isabella's ideal of a well-ordered society—'men-at-arms in the field, bishops in their pontificals, robbers on the gallows'—was on its way to being fulfilled. Yet there was a reverse side to their achievements and a price to be paid for them. The increase of taxation, unequally distributed among their subjects, inaugurated

a long process of official plunder which had ruinous results for the Castilian economy. Government intervention in so many departments of public life swelled the ranks of bureaucracy, which ended by becoming a parasite on the nation and was always in danger of stagnation unless inspired by royal initiative. The predominance of Castile involved a partial neglect of the eastern kingdoms, for the absence of the monarch inevitably meant that their affairs were dealt with relatively slowly.

But the greatest defect in the policy of the Catholic Monarchs, and one which did irreparable damage to the interests of their country, was the complacency with which they regarded social and economic conditions in Spain. Much had been taken from the Castilian aristocracy, but much still remained to it. The objective of the monarchs was no more than a minimum one—to prevent the more powerful of their subjects from competing for sovereignty and managing the affairs of the country as they willed. Once this had been done they were content to leave the nobility undisturbed; indeed they sought its alliance for the work of administration. It may be true, as is constantly asserted, that they filled the royal councils and other agencies with professional lawyers, and made a practice of giving office and preferment to smaller men, to jurists like Palacios Rubios, ecclesiastics like Ximénez, and soldiers like Gonzalo de Córdoba.[10] Contemporaries were aware of this too. The jurist and chronicler Lorenzo Galíndez de Carvajal (1472–1532) noted that they 'were more inclined to appoint prudent people suitable for their service, even though they were of middle rank, rather than those of noble houses'; and somewhat later the chronicler Diego Hurtado de Mendoza referred to their practice of employing jurists, 'people mid-way between the great and the small, whose profession was to study law'. But the viceroyalties, governorships, and most of the higher military appointments were reserved for the great nobles. And from the lesser nobility the Catholic Monarchs took their provincial officials, the *corregidores*. In any case feudalism was not abolished in Spain the day the crown assumed the masterships of the Military Orders; the seigneurial jurisdiction of the nobility survived, buttressed by a vast landed wealth. Behind the façade of royal authority, indeed with its connivance, the higher nobles continued to enjoy an economic preponderance which made them the most powerful section of Castilian society.

2. Aristocracy and Land in Castile

The majority of Spaniards, about 95 per cent., lived in the country and were peasants; few of them owned the land on which they worked, for

[10] On the principles of appointment employed by the Catholic Monarchs see R. Menéndez Pidal, ed. W. Starkie, *The Spaniards in Their History* (London, 1950), pp. 158–64.

land in Spain was virtually monopolised by the aristocracy and the church.[11] Between peasants and nobles there was nothing resembling a middle class, either in the economic or in the social sense. The most that can be said is that there was a small minority of people who were neither peasants nor nobles —merchants and professional men (many of whom were Jews), clerics, and small rural proprietors. These groups comprised less than 4 per cent. of the population. At the top of the social pyramid was the aristocracy, an even smaller minority but possessing power and wealth in inverse proportion to its numbers. Including great magnates and higher ecclesiastics, gentry and urban patriciate, this class formed less than 2 per cent. of the population and owned about 95–97 per cent. of the land. Amassing territory conquered from the Moors, adding to it by depredations on crown land, protecting it by entail, and turning it into sheep-runs for the profitable wool trade, the Castilian aristocracy of the later middle ages had based its political power on unassailable economic foundations. To break this power would have been a formidable task and it could hardly be done in a single generation.

Ferdinand and Isabella were content to wrest political power from its hands and place it where it rightly belonged, in the crown. But to do this they accepted a compromise: they recognised the aristocracy's immunity from taxation and its possession of seigneurial jurisdiction, and sanctioned its monopoly of land. They did not even succeed in making courtiers out of the nobility, as is so often supposed. A powerful noble had two residences —a palace in town and an estate in the country. In the latter he possessed real power and exercised a feudal jurisdiction over his tenants which was still a challenge to the sovereignty of the state. Half a century after the accession of the Catholic Monarchs, the Duke of Infantado, of the formidable Mendoza family, was still lord of 800 villages and 90,000 vassals, and ruled his estates in Guadalajara like a powerful princeling. When royal prestige declined on the death of Isabella and the exclusion of Ferdinand from Castile, the Duke of Medina Sidonia could offer 2,000 cavalry and 50,000 ducats to Ferdinand's rival, Philip of Austria, as well as intervene actively in politics. And even if the Castilian aristocracy was eventually eclipsed as an independent political power, it still retained enormous material power based on its landed property.[12] Far from reducing this, the Catholic Monarchs sanctioned its extension, and thus compensated the nobility for its political losses by preserving

[11] On social and economic conditions in this period see S. Sobrequés Vidal, 'La época de los Reyes Católicos', in J. Vicens Vives, ed., *Historia social y económica de España y América* (5 vols., Barcelona, 1957–59), ii. 407–92. See also J. Vicens Vives, *Apuntes del curso de Historia Económica de España* (2 vols., Barcelona, 1956), i. 249–70.

[12] On the origins of the latifundia in Spain see L. Redonet y López-Dóriga, 'El latifundio y su formación en la España medieval', *Estudios de Historia Social de España*, i. (1949), 139–203.

its economic gains. For the rights of property fixed by Ferdinand and Isabella lasted throughout the Habsburg period and beyond. In the cortes of Toledo (1480) they passed measures which forced nobles to disgorge crown lands which they had seized since the reign of Henry IV (1454), but at the same time they gave them absolute security for acquisitions made before that date, which were precisely the greatest and the most important. In addition, they confirmed the right of *mayorazgo*, or entail, which enabled landed proprietors to render their estates immune from alienation and tie them in perpetuity to their family. They approved the practice of aristocratic marriage alliances which could only result in concentrating property still further in the hands of the possessing class. Finally, in Granada they pursued a policy which was unmistakably pro-aristocratic. Granada was a new conquest, but with the exception of lands in the western part of the kingdom which were given to peasants and artisans in Lower Andalucía, its rich territory was granted entirely to nobles in compensation for what they lost in 1480.

Facts like these explain the enormous fortunes possessed by the Castilian nobility from then onwards. At the top were about 300 magnates, styled grandees from the middle of the fifteenth century, many of them related by marriage to each other and some of them to the crown. Extremadura was divided, almost half and half, between the Suárez de Figueroa and the Order of Alcántara.[13] The immense plains of La Mancha were shared among the Orders of Santiago and Calatrava, the archbishop of Toledo, and the marquis of Villena. In Murcia the greatest single landowners were the Fajardos; in Salamanca the Zúñiga (dukes of Béjar), and the Alvarez de Toledo (dukes of Alba); in the Alcarria the Mendoza (dukes of Infantado). The Enríquez (Admirals of Castile) possessed most of the provinces of Valladolid and Valencia, as well as estates in Andalucía, and the Pimentel (counts of Benavente) that of León. But outstripping all the rest were the great magnates of Andalucía, which was divided in vast latifundia among the Gúzman (dukes of Medina Sidonia), the Cerda (dukes of Medinaceli), the Ponce de León (dukes of Arcos), the Fernández de Córdoba (dukes of Sesa), and the Mendoza (counts of Teudilla and of Priego); the rest belonged to the archbishop of Toledo. In general the higher aristocracy owned more than half the land of Castile. Most of the remainder was divided in smaller lots among the lesser aristocracy and the church, whose best benefices were in any case claimed by the younger sons of the nobility. Less than 5 per cent. was owned by the middle sections of society, urban or rural. The peasants owned practically nothing. It can hardly be said, therefore, that the problem of the aristocracy was solved by the Catholic Monarchs.

The easy success of the nobility created in the whole of Castilian society

[13] Sobrequés Vidal, *op. cit.*, p. 420.

a pro-aristocratic mentality and gave it its characteristic imprint for centuries to come. And their ranks, if they could be gained, offered a means of escape from fiscal burdens in an age of rising taxes. The middle sections of society, on the other hand, received few benefits from royal policy. No doubt the restoration of public order and authority and the consequent release of pent-up economic forces stimulated trade and industry and made some difference to their incomes. But it was precisely under the Catholic Monarchs that they lost perhaps the most enterprising of their number. In the interests of religious uniformity the Jews were expelled from the country and the *conversos*, or converts from Judaism, were exposed to a campaign of investigation that undermined their security. In the economic and urban life of Spain the Jews had occupied key positions; as financiers, artisans, and officials they dominated productive enterprises except in agriculture.[14] Granted their number, prosperity, and influence, it is not surprising that they should arouse envy and hatred, especially among the aristocracy and clergy; and their attachment to Judaism, even after nominal conversion, was an affront to the religious susceptibilities of the Catholic Monarchs and many of their subjects. Therefore, the monarchs had no hesitation in damaging the economy of the country to secure their objectives. The issues at stake were clear enough, and were made even clearer to them by the urban reaction to their anti-Jewish policy, especially to the decision to establish the Inquisition. The municipalities of Seville, Toledo, Barcelona, Valencia, and Zaragoza made urgent and reasoned protests about the damage which the establishment of the Inquisition entailed for their towns, causing as it did the flight of the *conversos* and of their capital; and the monarchs invariably replied that they preferred the religious to the material welfare of the country. And this was perfectly true. For the numbers involved were not insignificant; apart from those executed by the Inquisition, thousands of *conversos* left the country. Their liquidation, accompanied by seizure of their property, had a paralysing effect on the economy of the country because it abstracted not only a vital part of the community but also a considerable amount of capital. For this reason, and not on doctrinal grounds, there was much resistance to the establishment of the Inquisition in the eastern kingdoms, whose commercial centres, especially in Catalonia and Valencia, were seriously hit. Not content with this, the crown also decided to expel the Jews themselves; out of an estimated 200,000 at the beginning of the reign, about 150,000 refused baptism and were forced to leave Spain in 1492, taking with them their skill and their wealth. These measures, in conjunction with the pro-aristocratic bias that was already deeply embedded in society, were a powerful deterrent to the growth of a middle class in Spain.

[14] See A. A. Neuman, *The Jews in Spain* (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1948). And see below, pp. 20–22.

If the policy of the Catholic Monarchs offered little to urban society, it offered even less to the rural masses. The only exception was Catalonia, where a peasants' revolt against feudal landowners led to both sides putting the case in the hands of King Ferdinand. His judgement was given in the Sentence of Guadalupe (1486), which abolished feudal services in return for compensation to the lords and gave the Catalan peasants some measure of property rights.[15] In Aragon, on the other hand, where the problem of the peasantry was analogous to that in Catalonia, the crown gave its support to the feudal lords. In Castile, with a complete disregard for the real situation, the crown confirmed the right of tenants to abandon their lord, change their residence and take with them their goods (1481). But in view of the aristocratic monopoly of land the right was largely theoretical and simply a reflection of aristocratic confidence; as the peasant had no place to escape to, it was hardly necessary to fix him to the soil by legislation. In Aragon and most of Castile, therefore, the peasant remained a tenant paying his rent in kind and often in services, and possessing no security of tenure; otherwise he was a landless labourer. Beset by plague, drought, and famine, he was also completely at the mercy of his lord or his employer, against whom he had no legal protection. And he looked in vain for any legislation in favour of the small proprietor.

Yet throughout southern and central Spain there were vast tracts of untilled land. The main reason why it was not given over to farming was that its use was monopolised by the owners of livestock, especially of the flocks of migrant merino sheep in which Spain abounded. Since the thirteenth century the major economic activity of Castile was the raising of merino sheep for their wool, with the result that there arose a serious imbalance between arable and pastoral agriculture. By the time of the Catholic Monarchs the situation called for government leadership, but here too royal policy was conservative and aristocratic in bias. Again Catalonia was an exception. In the eastern kingdom, where Ferdinand provided conditions for a brief economic revival, he refused to sanction the absolute claims of the sheep-breeders to property rights; in 1511 in the cortes of Monzón he prohibited the passage of the herds of sheep through cultivated land. This decision was crucial for the development of agriculture in the Mediterranean regions of Spain. But it was quite the opposite of that taken ten years previously in Castile. What was possible in Catalonia, of course, was not necessarily possible in Castile, where powerful interests had a stake in sheep-breeding and the wool trade. But the crown did not merely sanction the

[15] J. Vicens Vives, *Historia de los remensas en el siglo XV* (Barcelona, 1945); *El Gran Sindicato remensa (1488–1508). La última etapa del pleito agrario catalán durante el reinado de Fernando el Católico* (Madrid, 1954).

status quo: it short-sightedly worsened it. It came out firmly on the side of pastoral interests, embodied in their organisation, the Mesta, which the Catholic Monarchs defended against all opposition and controlled by assigning a royal councillor as its president (1500).[16] No one who enclosed pasture for cultivation had any chance of success against the attacks of cattle-owners, who invariably received royal support. This support culminated in the notorious *Ley de arriendo del suelo* (law of land lease) of 1501, which gave the Mesta the right to use in perpetuity and at fixed rents any land it had once used as pasture; although the Mesta only rented the land, this measure gave it a virtual entail of its pastures—and in any dispute its own officials were judges. Immense tracts of land in Andalucía and Extremadura were thus tied to the Mesta and to the interests of its directors. Agriculture could hardly have been made less attractive

Why was royal policy in Castile so different from that in Catalonia, and why did Ferdinand and Isabella abdicate so utterly to pastoral interests? Partly because it was not entirely a question of abdication. One of the main beneficiaries of their policy was the crown, which received a quick and sure revenue from the taxes on sheep and the sale of wool; therefore instead of promoting agriculture and awaiting its returns, the crown preferred the easy way out of its financial difficulties and one which had proved its worth in the past. Moreover, commercial and industrial interests were involved: the sale of the merino wool abroad was extremely lucrative, and its manufacture at home was the only Castilian industry of any importance. But the aristocracy had the biggest stake of all; many of them had turned their lands almost entirely to pasture, because it gave them a profitable commodity to sell and one which, unlike arable farming in the arid conditions of Castile, needed little investment of money and manpower. This powerful alliance of interests determined the fate of agricultural production. From the beginning of the sixteenth century Spain inevitably began to suffer a serious shortage of grain; in 1506, for the first time, the population had to be fed from large-scale imports of wheat and thereafter became increasingly dependent on foreign supplies.[17] Many parts of Spain were close to famine in 1506, and the danger haunted her for the rest of the century and beyond.

On foundations like these it was impossible to build a balanced economy. The Catholic Monarchs hardly attempted to do so. The traditional theory that they promoted industry in Castile is not sustained by existing evidence, for the industries cited are either those producing luxury goods or those working for a local market. The immense pile of edicts with which they

[16] J. Klein, *The Mesta* (Cambridge, Mass., 1920), pp. 52, 316–26.

[17] E. Ibarra y Rodríguez, *El problema cerealista en España durante el reinado de los Reyes Católicos (1475–1516)* (Madrid, 1941).

regulated manufacturing processes cannot disguise the lack of coherence in their policy and the fact that they had already committed themselves to the aristocratic interest by the protection given to stock-breeding. In fact, their regulations handicapped industry. From about 1480 Ferdinand encouraged the extension of gilds which were then stifled with a surfeit of regulations. In 1511 he issued the Ordinance of Seville, a collection of no less than 120 rules prescribing the lawful process of weaving cloth. Throughout the sixteenth century Spanish industry was shackled by regulations of this kind; at a time when industry in the rest of Europe was beginning to escape from gild control, that of Castile was put into a corporative straight-jacket. The only industries of any stature were the iron industry of the Basque provinces, which could draw on natural resources and shelter under the protection of regional privileges, and the textile industry of Castile, which was given a new impetus by the discovery of America and the opening of new markets there, especially from about 1505. But industry in general was dealt another blow by the flight of the *converso* artisans. It was no coincidence that from the time the Inquisition was established the crown had to publish edicts inviting foreign workers to Spain (1484), and to take the unprecedented step of granting foreign workers who came to Castile exemption from all taxes for ten years.[18]

The expansion of Castilian commerce, on the other hand, coincided with the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella and owed something to their initiative.[19] There was already a tradition of commerce in Castile and this was strengthened by the peaceful conditions which they provided. Export of wool was the chief item of foreign trade, and the crown did its best to promote it, if only to increase its revenue therefrom. During the reign the wool trade was systematically organised. Agents were sent to the principal foreign markets —Bruges, La Rochelle, London, and Florence—to review demand, prices, and competition, and from these centres they sent information to the court. Once this had been assimilated, contacts were established between foreign merchants and the authorities of the Mesta in order to organise export. The Catholic Monarchs also sought to reserve the carrying trade to Spain by means of navigation acts. Nevertheless, the protection given by the Catholic Monarchs to industry and commerce was not part of a considered programme, even of a mercantilist kind; their interest in this direction was small indeed compared to the protection given to aristocratic landowners. In any case, the country lacked capital to invest in productive enterprises.

[18] Vicens Vives, *Apuntes del curso de Historia Ecónomica de España*, p. 263.

[19] See M. Mollat, 'Le rôle international des marchands espagnols dans les ports occidentaux à l'époque des Rois Catholiques', V Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón (*Estudios*, I), pp. 35–61.

The discovery of America was still too recent for its mineral wealth to be available for industrial expansion in Spain. Later, when treasure imports began to mount they were quickly dispersed abroad to pay for foreign wars and for foreign goods, including grain. Castile remained essentially an agrarian, pastoral, and feudal country as it had been in the middle ages. And the Catholic Monarchs never even began to undertake the admittedly formidable task of integrating the various regions of Spain into an economic whole.

The economic relations between the constituent kingdoms were not radically altered in the formative years of Spain's national history. In 1479, when Ferdinand and Isabella began to govern their joint possessions, the Catalan merchants believed that a period of *hermandad hispánica*, of Spanish fraternity, had begun. For the impoverished Catalans and their declining trade, the assurance of a market in Castile and Andalucía for their cloths and spices, and a share in the export of wool, would have been inestimable benefits. But their illusions were shattered—not because of Castilian aversion to Catalans but because the powerful Mesta opposed them and because their chief rivals for Mediterranean trade, the Genoese, had more to offer to the crown than the penurious Catalans, whose demands were consequently ignored. Catalans were still regarded as foreigners and were refused admittance to the fairs of Medina del Campo on equal footing with the merchants of Castile. For these reasons the two streams of the medieval Spanish economy, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, continued their separate courses and maintained a division which bedevilled the economy of Habsburg Spain and remained unchanged until the second half of the eighteenth century. This was a reflection, of course, on the concept of unity held by the Catholic Monarchs, for the unity of a country cannot be complete without its economic integration. And in their reign there was a new opportunity. The empire in America could have been a decisive bond: here, apparently, was a field open to common interests and to a genuinely Spanish enterprise.

The political unity of Spain was virtually complete when Isabella sponsored the expedition of Columbus in 1492, and the state she and her husband had created was sufficiently mature to found an overseas empire and to exploit it. Yet the American trade was closed to the subjects of the crown of Aragon. The reasons advanced to explain such a policy are not always convincing: the political antagonism between Castile and Catalonia, and the fact that legally America was exclusively the patrimony of Castile, were hardly relevant issues. The anxiety of the crown to control the new enterprise and monopolise its fruits, and therefore to exclude foreigners, is more to the point, for these needs could be better served by canalising the enterprise through Castile, which had discovered the Indies. In any case, Catalonia at first held back and showed little interest in America until later in the sixteenth

century, when Catalan merchants made formal attempts to participate in the Indies trade. By that time, however, the favourable Atlantic location of Andalucía and Castile had proved decisive and had given them a natural monopoly of communications with America which the crown itself sanctioned in order to exclude foreigners and to reserve trade and bullion to Spain. Whatever the reasons, however, the fact remained that Spain's American empire was primarily a Castilian empire. This gave added weight to the preponderance of Castile in the union of the Spanish kingdoms and sharpened the economic divisions between them. Meanwhile, in yet another direction, Castile had begun to impose its policies on the whole of Spain.

3. The Spanish Inquisition

The medieval Inquisition, a special court for the detection, trial, and punishment of heresy, had existed since 1233 when it was created by the papacy to deal with the Albigensian heresy in Southern France. Although it subsequently extended its operations to other countries, it invariably encountered royal resentment of papal intervention. It entered Aragon—not Castile—but never flourished there. Everywhere it was virtually obsolete by the fifteenth century, not to be revived in Rome until 1542, in the new context of Protestantism. The essential constitutional feature of the medieval Inquisition was papal control, exercised through the General and Provincials of the Dominican Order.

The Spanish Inquisition differed from the papal Inquisition both in its origin and in its organisation.[20] In the first place, there was no serious heresy in fifteenth-century Spain and no one was trying to found a new religion. The Spanish Inquisition was created to deal with convert Jews. During the middle ages, as has been noticed, the Jews had made striking progress in Spain, establishing themselves in key positions in the political and economic life of the country, even as royal counsellors. Their relations with Christians, which had long been amicable, were shattered in the second half of the fourteenth century; in a period of great economic depression, their exceptional success aroused resentment which eventually turned into hatred and erupted at times into violence like the massacres of 1391. To save their lives and their fortunes many Jews, especially in Andalucía, became Christians;

[20] In spite of its age and its bias the work of H. C. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain* (4 vols., New York and London, 1922, first published 1906–7), is still the most detailed and comprehensive account of the subject that exists. But modern historiography has greatly advanced the subject: see Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition* (London, 1965); Ricardo García Cárcel, *Orígenes de la Inquisición española. El tribunal de Valencia, 1478–1530* (Barcelona, 1976); and Bartolomé Bennassar, *L'Inquisition espagnole (xv^e–xix^e siècles)* (Paris, 1979).

these baptised Jews were known as *conversos*, or New Christians, and numbered over 100,000. Protected by their new religion they made even further progress, for now the church as well as the state was open to them and in both they acquired positions of responsibility. In many cases, as conversion to Christianity had been simulated, it was known, or suspected, that they secretly continued to adhere to the Jewish religion. It was only to be expected that many of the converts were insincere—or Judaisers, as they were called—for the mass conversions of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were the result of persecution and terror. And persecution did not cease with conversion: there were frequent and sometimes murderous clashes between Old and New Christians, as in Toledo in 1467 and in Córdoba in 1473. Finally, many of the New Christians became the bitterest enemies of their former brethren. Anxious to protest their own orthodoxy and to protect themselves against the suspicions of the Old Christians, converts denounced not only Jews but also fellow converts, and this spirit of rivalry and jealousy may have aggravated the intolerance of the Inquisition itself; many officials of the early Spanish Inquisition, including Torquemada, were descended from New Christians.[21]

Fear of the apostasy of the Judaisers and the conviction that church and state were being undermined from within were the decisive reasons for the creation of the Inquisition in Spain. The Catholic Monarchs were prepared to use force to ensure unity of religion, and were pressed to do so by powerful groups among the Old Christians, especially the clergy and the aristocracy. The arch-inspirer of the Inquisition in Spain was the prior of the Dominican community in Seville, Alonso de Hojeda, who exercised great influence on the Catholic Monarchs; it was he who denounced the existence of numerous groups of *conversos* allegedly practising Judaism. But the Dominican offensive fed upon the anti-semitism of the masses. Artisans, tradesmen, labourers, many Old Christians of the poorer classes envied the material and social success of the Jews and *conversos*, their position as crown financiers, their talents as scientists and men of the professions, and their marriage alliances with the aristocracy, and they accused them of being pseudo-converts. The first generation of *familiares*, those agents of the Inquisition so active as spies and informers, were recruited among the popular sectors rather than the upper classes, who only later became interested in Inquisition offices. The crown too had motives additional to religion. While the Inquisition was not created with the sole object of robbing the *conversos*,

[21] Américo Castro, *The Structure of Spanish History*, trans. Edmund L. King (Princeton, 1954), pp. 421–30, 532, 540, argues that 'the Inquisition had been in the making since the beginning of the fifteenth century', largely by 'deserters from Israel'. The thesis is not entirely convincing.

acquisitive motives were not absent from official calculations. Royal finances were in a state of crisis at the time, before the reforms of Ferdinand and Isabella had come to fruition; therefore those who advised economic measures against the *conversos*—confiscation of property—were given a hearing. For some time, however, the Catholic Monarchs stayed their hand; they were fully occupied establishing their rule and could only proceed piecemeal. During this period Pope Sixtus IV renewed previous attempts made by the papacy to introduce the papal Inquisition, but without success, for Ferdinand and Isabella were anxious to limit rather than extend opportunities for papal intervention. Moreover, many of the most important posts in their own administration were filled with *conversos*, and there must have been a desperate and discreet struggle on the part of these men to prevent the introduction of a tribunal that could only mean anguish for themselves. However, when their hands were free, the monarchs requested licence from the pope to establish the Inquisition—but not the papal Inquisition. They were seeking a tribunal which would be entirely under their control, excluding intervention from Rome. For this reason Sixtus IV hesitated to grant their request, but he finally capitulated and by bull of 1 November 1478 he authorised the crown to appoint Inquisitors with jurisdiction over heretics. So the Spanish Inquisition came into being.[22] Owing perhaps to further opposition within Spain, two years passed before it began to operate. Then, on 27 September 1480, by virtue of the powers received from the pope, the Catholic Monarchs appointed the first inquisitors for Seville, which was regarded as a hot-bed of Judaisers.

The early actions of the Inquisition in Andalucía were ruthless and violent: the first *auto de fe* was held at Seville on 6 February 1481, and six victims were burned. Other tribunals sprang up elsewhere, and judging by the number and frequency of the death sentences and by the heavy confiscation of property, their measures were harsh and oppressive. This early reign of terror provoked frantic opposition from the *conversos*—appeals to Rome, to regional immunities, to local magistrates, and also to the monarchs, to whom they offered money. When nothing else availed them, they had recourse to violent counter-measures, the most spectacular being the assassination of the Inquisitor of Aragon, Pedro de Arbués, in the cathedral of Zaragoza in 1485. Such resistance only prompted the Inquisition to greater efforts. and in spite of opposition from the other regions it spread beyond Castile into the length and breadth of Spain. It was also deaf to the protests of Rome.

[22] On the role of the papacy see B. Llorca, S.J., *Bulario pontificio de la Inquisición española en su período constitucional (1478–1525)* (Rome, 1949).

Perturbed by the violence of the first tribunals, Sixtus IV regretted the extensive powers he had conceded to the Spanish crown and tried to halt the drastic programme of the Spanish Inquisition by restricting its independence and its powers. But in the face of the determination of Ferdinand and Isabella and of the negotiations undertaken on their behalf by Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia—the future Alexander VI—he gave way once again. He authorised the creation of a Supreme Council of the Inquisition and the appointment of an Inquisitor general with full delegated power in the person of Fray Tomás de Torquemada, royal confessor and prior of the Dominican monastery of Santa Cruz in Segovia.

Beyond the fact that he was a pious and sombre man and an implacable enemy of heresy, little is known for certain about Torquemada, and his biography remains to be written. In spite of many assertions to the contrary, he was not the architect of the Spanish Inquisition and there is no evidence that his was the deciding influence in the actual establishment of the new tribunal. But once he had been appointed Inquisitor general in 1483 he was responsible for giving the Inquisition its definitive organisation. Among the powers granted to Torquemada was that of modifying the traditional rules of the Inquisition to meet the requirements of Spain. This made the institution virtually self-governing and gave the Spanish Inquisition a character of its own independent of Rome. Between 1484 and 1489, the year of his death, Torquemada drew up a series of Instructions which defined the constitution of the tribunal and established its procedure. These were extended periodically until 1561 when Inquisitor general Valdés issued a revised constitution which, with a few later modifications, governed the Inquisition for the rest of its history.

The Spanish Inquisition was created in the form of a council of state, the Council of the Supreme and General Inquisition—usually called the Suprema —with jurisdiction in all matters of heresy. Thus the conciliar formula favoured by the Catholic Monarchs for the solution of their administrative problems was applied to religion too. To secure royal control over the new institution and exclude that of the pope, the monarchs then had to ensure that the president of the Suprema had full control of the appointment and dismissal of individual inquisitors, and that they themselves controlled the president. Therefore they created a new office, unknown to the medieval Inquisition, an Inquisitor general, who presided over the meetings of the Suprema and was head of the entire Inquisition. Appointment to the office of Inquisitor general rested exclusively with the crown, as did appointment of subordinate officials, though in practice these were usually appointed by the Inquisitor general and the Suprema. In this way the crown avoided both the possibility of papal intervention and the danger of the Inquisition itself becoming inde-

pendent. The Suprema, also appointed by the crown, consisted of six members, who included representatives of the Dominican order and the Council of Castile. It heard appeals from the local tribunals, and also controlled the financial administration of the Inquisition, its property and the proceeds of its confiscations, the profits of which went to the royal treasury.

Who were the Inquisitors? Not all were Dominicans. In the beginning, it is true, these took the lead, but they soon lost whatever monopoly they may have exercised. Subsequently the Inquisitors were almost always senior members of the secular clergy, university graduates making their way in a career in church or state. Out of forty-five Inquisitors General between 1481 and 1820, only five were Dominicans. As for the provincial tribunals, they were never controlled by the Dominicans. In Toledo only one friar held the office between 1482 and 1598; here too most of the Inquisitors were university graduates, products of the *colegios mayores*, the nurseries of the Spanish bureaucracy.

Canonically, as the Inquisition was an ecclesiastical tribunal, the pope was its head. In theory this was admitted by the Spanish authorities, but in practice papal jurisdiction was rigidly excluded. Similarly the papacy managed to cling to the principle of its appellate jurisdiction, but was unable to apply it. The practical effect of this was that it became impossible to appeal a case from the Spanish Inquisition to Rome, and in this direction Spain was to set an example even to Protestant countries. In matters of heresy the Inquisition had jurisdiction over all laymen and clergy—but not bishops—to the exclusion of all other courts. From its judgement there was no appeal, not even to the pope, who in three centuries of the Spanish tribunal's existence managed to claim from it only three cases for his judgement. Independent of the papacy, the Spanish Inquisition was a close and subordinate ally of the crown, and on more than one occasion its authority was to be abused for political purposes. Indeed, this dual character of the Spanish Inquisition, deriving from the close alliance of church and state in Spain, was one of its most peculiar features; it combined the spiritual authority of the church with the temporal power of the crown.

Operating under the central council of the Inquisition were permanent local tribunals which represented for the mass of the people the real embodiment of its power. There were some thirteen of these tribunals in Spain, situated in the principal towns; outside Spain tribunals operated in the Canaries, Sicily, and Sardinia, and from the 1570's in the Indies. The introduction of the Inquisition in the states of the crown of Aragon was strongly opposed; there it was seen as an alien institution, an agent of Castilian intervention, and a possible threat to economic interests. In 1484 the cortes of Valencia denounced the new tribunal, which had been operating in the

eastern kingdom since 1481, as a violation of its *fueros*. The action of Ferdinand in importing the Inquisition was resented by almost all senior officials, partly because it was regarded as a new power in the land, partly because its initial impact was so severe.

The Inquisition in Valencia claimed almost 1,000 victims in 1488 alone. Up to 1530 this tribunal tried 2,354 people, 1,197 of them men, 1,157 women; the nobility provided few of the accused, the clergy rather more, while the middle sectors, specially the merchant groups, were represented by 44·6 per cent., and the popular classes, especially artisans, by 47 per cent. If it was less severe than Toledo (6,150 up to 1505) and Seville (20,000 up to 1524), the Valencia tribunal was much harsher than 'lenient' tribunals such as Ciudad Real (269 up to 1530). The death penalty was imposed in only a minority of cases, but the proportion was high in the earlier years. In Valencia out of 1,842 victims whose sentences are known 754, or 41 per cent., were executed up to 1530. The Seville tribunal was even harsher; elsewhere burnings were less frequent. Altogether the Spanish Inquisition put to death some 5,000 people in the period up to 1530. In the period 1560–1700, on the other hand, among 50,000 cases there were 500 death sentences, or 1 per cent. The primary purpose of the Inquisition was to extinguish Judaism, and the majority of the early victims, perhaps 80–90 per cent. of all those executed, were alleged Judaisers. The rest were accused of miscellaneous offences, Lutheranism, blasphemy, witchcraft and, in the case of moriscos, adherence to Islamic ways. As the moriscos were also regarded as a security threat, the rôle of the Inquisition here approached that of a police force at the service of the state.

The legal procedure of the Spanish Inquisition was marked by the fact that the tribunals combined two functions, judicial and police. They were not ordinary courts of law, because they also had powers of investigation, and in addition to the punishment of offenders they also wanted their confession and renunciation in order to save their souls. This dual purpose was reflected in the actual procedure they used. The procedure of the medieval Inquisition was by pure *inquisitio*, that is to say the inquisitor acted as both prosecutor and judge. Superficially the Spanish Inquisition proceeded more impartially, by way of *accusatio*, with a public prosecutor as an accuser and the inquisitors acting only as judges. But this was legal fiction and simply meant that the inquisitor had the assistance of a trained lawyer in making the prosecution; it was the inquisitors who gathered evidence, and like their medieval predecessors they were prosecutors as well as judges.

Each locality had to be visited every year by an inquisitor who solemnly published an *Edict of Faith*, which, in the form of a minute questionnaire, imposed on every Christian under pain of major excommunication the

obligation to denounce known heretics. When the tribunal itself saw a suspicious situation—which was mainly in the first century of its existence—it would begin by publishing an *Edict of Grace*, which allowed a period of 30–40 days to all who wished to come forward voluntarily to confess faults and errors. Confession usually meant pardon and only light penalties, but there was a condition attached—that the penitent reveal his accomplices. Both edicts were open to serious abuses. In particular, the Edict of Faith, by enjoining denunciations, forced the faithful to co-operate in the work of the Inquisition and made everyone its agent or its spy, offering moreover an irresistible temptation for the relief of private malice. The two edicts usually led to a crop of denunciations—which were also expected to contain the names of witnesses—and it was either these or the investigations of the inquisitors themselves which initiated the legal proceedings.

If the accusations were accepted then the accused was imprisoned in the secret gaols of the Inquisition, usually in humane conditions, but utterly secluded from the outside world and deprived of all contact with his family and friends. The case then proceeded, slowly and in strict secrecy, and based throughout on the assumption that the accused was guilty. But the greatest defect in the legal procedure of the Spanish Inquisition was the fact that the accused was kept uninformed about the identity of his accusers and their witnesses, who were thereby relieved from responsibility, while the accused was left largely helpless in preparing his defence. His only safeguard was that he could draw up a list of his enemies, and if it contained any of the accusers then their evidence would be discounted. Otherwise almost any kind of evidence and any type of witness were accepted for the prosecution, whereas the questions put to the defence witnesses, and whether they were called at all, were entirely at the discretion of the inquisitors. Once the case for the prosecution was ready, the organisation of the defence could begin. The accused was allowed an officially appointed lawyer, but he could refuse him and request another. He was also provided with a counsellor whose function it was to convince him that he should make a sincere confession. The pressure of the counsellor, together with the secrecy of the accusers and witnesses, undoubtedly weakened the position of the defendant which his own lawyer and witnesses could hardly be expected to redress. Indeed, the secrecy of informers and witnesses was an innovation in Spain, alarming to contemporaries, and contrary to the procedure of other courts of law. But the situation of the accused was rendered even more desperate by the power of the Inquisition, like other tribunals of the time, to use torture to procure evidence and confession. Bloodshed and anything likely to cause permanent injury were forbidden, but this still left room for three painful methods of torture, all of which were well known and not peculiar to the

Inquisition: the rack, the hoist, and the water-torture. Even if their use was infrequent and accompanied by medical safeguards, they were horribly inappropriate in matters of conscience.

After evidence had been taken and qualified theologians consulted if necessary—all of which invariably took a long time, sometimes four or five years—sentence was passed. If the accused confessed his guilt in the course of the trial *before* sentence was passed and his confession was accepted, then he was absolved and dismissed with lighter punishment. Otherwise sentence would be acquittal or condemnation. A verdict of guilty did not necessarily mean death. It depended first of all on the gravity of the offence, and the penalties, which were derived from medieval civil and canon law, might involve penance, fine or flogging for minor offences, and the dreaded galleys or crippling confiscation of property for more serious ones. But it also depended on many other factors, such as the circumstances of the time, the character of the accused, and above all on the temperament of the judges, not all of whom were equally relentless. In proportion to the number of cases the death penalty was rare. On the other hand a repentant heretic who relapsed again never escaped the death penalty. Those who persisted in heresy, or in their denial of guilt, were burnt alive. Those who repented at the last minute and *after* sentence, whether sincerely or not, were strangled first, then burnt. The execution itself was not performed by the Inquisition but by the civil authorities. The Spanish *auto de fe* was merely an elaborately staged public exhibition at which the sentence was pronounced and discussed amidst much ceremony. The heretic was then 'relaxed' to the secular arm, which carried out the sentence of burning, often at a different time and place. Beginning as a means of instilling awe and terror in the faithful, the *auto de fe* soon degenerated into a social occasion of perverse excitement and became a kind of religious entertainment to celebrate a royal wedding or a monarch's visit or some other public function. But only major cases were completed with an *auto de fe*. In minor ones the sentences were published privately.

Although the Spanish Inquisition was established primarily to deal with *conversos*, its jurisdiction extended to all matters of heresy, and consequently it also turned its attention to converted Moors, or moriscos, and to native Spanish heretics, Protestant or otherwise. The jurisdiction of the inquisition, however, was confined to Christians and it was not a means of converting unbelievers by force. It punished heresy and apostasy, but not the profession of a different faith, baptism being a pre-condition of heresy. For this reason, Jews, Moslems, and American Indians were excluded from its authority. The inquisition never prosecuted a Jew for being a Jew, or a Moslem for being a Moslem. It pursued converts from each faith who were suspected,

rightly or wrongly, to be secret apostates. Those Moors and Jews who refused baptism were expelled from Spain. But the work of the Spanish Inquisition was not confined to heresy: it also had jurisdiction in cases of bigamy, sodomy, and blasphemy, and on occasion, because of its efficiency, it even received administrative functions, such as the enforcement of customs regulations on the frontier. Of all its activities, however, one of the most characteristic and perhaps one of the most pernicious was related to the question of *limpieza de sangre*, or purity of blood.

The New Christians were objects of suspicion and prejudice which took the form of a spirit of exclusiveness among Old Christians and was prevalent even before the establishment of the Spanish Inquisition. Attempts had already been made to deprive them of official positions, in spite of the protests of the papacy, and this prejudice against Jewish blood continued, even among some religious orders. By the end of the sixteenth century various bodies excluded men of 'tainted' descent from admittance; these included the Inquisition itself, the Orders of Santiago, Alcántara, Calatrava, and St. John, all the university colleges, and many cathedral chapters, including that of Toledo, where *estatutos de nobleza*, regulations requiring proofs of nobility and purity of blood before candidates could obtain admission, were first promulgated. Discrimination of this kind was reflected in the policy of the Inquisition, which continued to regard Jewish ancestry as a security risk to church and state, and whose sensitivity to genealogy seemed to increase after its initial campaign had liquidated large numbers of *conversos*.[23] And the Inquisition, of course, was the instrument for testing purity of descent. All the above institutions required the most rigorous investigation to trace the slightest stain in the remotest grade of parentage. And there were two sources of descent which caused impurity of blood—from an ancestor who was Jewish or Moorish, or from one who had been sentenced by the Inquisition. Anyone who desired a tranquil career in church or state, or in many cases even admittance to one, applied to the Inquisition for certificates attesting their purity of blood, and for this purpose they described their genealogy, named witnesses and paid a fee. The whole process encouraged perjury, bribery and collusion, and offered yet another occasion for the gratification of spite. Those families with unimpeachable proof of a long Castilian lineage free of Moorish or Jewish blood seized the opportunity to discredit their rivals for office and social status by denouncing them as *conversos*. In spite of this a large minority of *conversos* managed to survive, and throughout the sixteenth century they were to be found in commercial and professional

[23] A. Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los conversos de origen judío después de la expulsión', *Estudios de Historia Social de España*, iii. (1955), 223–431.

occupations. Positions in church and state were not completely closed, though they occupied them in conditions of insecurity. Even during the reign of the Catholic Monarchs they were to be found in high places; men like Luis Santángel, notary-prebend of King Ferdinand, Alfonso de la Cavallería, vice-chancellor of the Council of Aragon, Fray Hernando de Talavera, confessor of the queen and archbishop of Granada, were all of Jewish race, though all at one time or another were objects of suspicion or persecution. In subsequent reigns descendants of *conversos* still managed to make their way in the world, the most distinguished example being Antonio Pérez, secretary of Philip II. But, socially rebuffed by the Old Christians and unwelcome as marriage partners, they remained an enclosed group of virtually second-class citizens. All this left its imprint on the Castilian mentality; the exaggerated sense of honour and hypersensitivity to ancestry and blood were nurtured in these conditions, and what had once been at least in part a religious prejudice became an attempt to limit the number of aspirants to office and social status.

Not content with the persecution of suspect converts, the search for religious unity and the conviction that it was impossible to solve the problem of the *conversos* while their former brethren were still tolerated led the Catholic Monarchs to undertake a much greater purge—the expulsion of the Jews. While the war with Granada lasted the action was not practicable; in any case the Jews contributed large subsidies to the enterprise. But their prolonged and direct contact with the numerous Jews in Lower Andalucía at the time when they were fighting another alien religion, reinforced the monarchs' desire for religious unity. A few months after the fall of Granada an edict was published (30 March 1492) by virtue of which the Jews were given four months to become Christians or leave the kingdom. Out of 200,000 Jews, about 150,000 chose to go. Portugal took many of these, but as a condition of the marriage of their daughter Isabella to Manoel I, the Catholic Monarchs insisted that Portugal too expel them. Others went to France, Africa, and the Ottoman Empire, where they settled in cities like Salonica and Constantinople, preserving their Castilian language and a bitter hatred of Spain. Meanwhile, what of the Moors?

4. Reconquest and Expansion

The union of the two major Iberian kingdoms created a formidable block of power, which, once it had been organised within, began to swell beyond its own frontiers. The fusion of religious and political ideals revived the spirit of crusade against Islam which had been dead for over a century. Without Granada the reconquest was incomplete and Spain itself dismembered;

and with the joint forces of Castile and Aragon ready for action the time had come to reduce the last remnants of Islam on Iberian soil. The enterprise was primarily Castile's affair, and was undertaken on her initiative; but Castile could not have brought it to fulfilment without the material collaboration of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia, who sent their quotas of troops, ships, money, and supplies as if the cause was their own. Even so the war was long and bitter, and it was ten years before the Moorish kingdom was overcome and Granada itself forced to capitulate.[24] The settlement was deceptively generous: the Moors were allowed to remain in the country with their own religion, laws, and magistrates. On these terms the Catholic Monarchs entered the Alhambra in triumph on 2 January 1492. A new kingdom with 300,000 inhabitants was added to the crown of Castile, and immense prestige and confidence; immense power too, not only from the wealth of the conquered territory and the new security to her southern coastline, but also from the military experience gained and the progress made in infantry techniques. In the mountain warfare of Granada the Spanish infantry was born, and a new general discovered; Europe was soon to be aware of Gonzalo de Córdoba and his troops. But there were liabilities as well as assets. Isabella and her advisers, though not Ferdinand, found it impossible to tolerate Moors, either those in Granada or those who had long lived peacefully in the rest of Spain. For the acquisition of Granada added a new dimension to the problem by increasing the number of Moors in Spain to some 500,000 out of a population of seven million. And there was no perfect solution. From 1502 Isabella initiated in Castile the policy of forced conversion, giving the Moors the alternative of baptism or expulsion. Her successors could do no better.

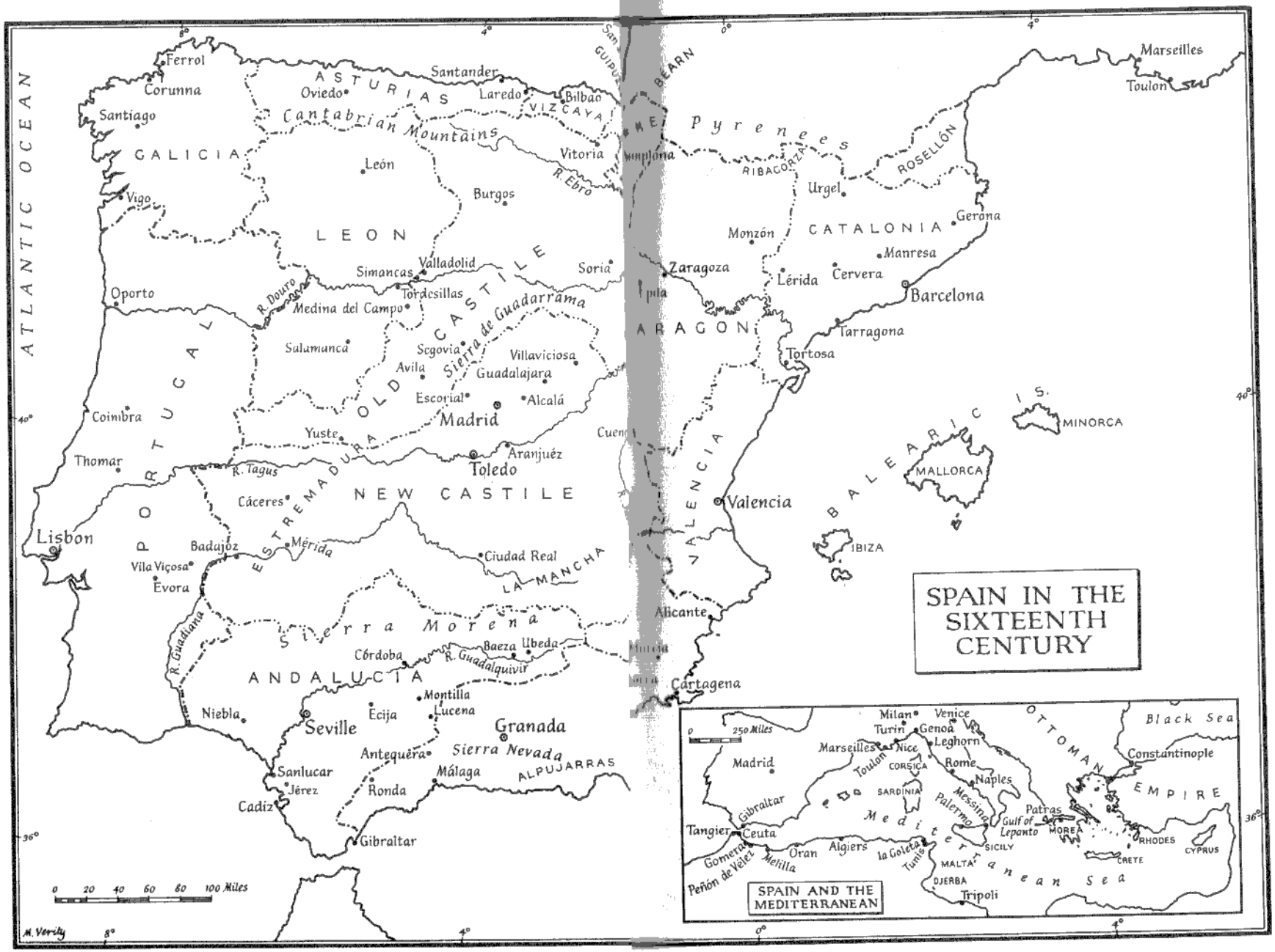
The logical process of crusade against Islam was to take the war across the narrow sea separating Spain from North Africa; this would also serve Spanish strategic interests by giving additional protection to the southern flank of the peninsula. With her forces freed from the war of Granada Castile was ready to turn reconquest into expansion and challenge Islam in the Mediterranean. But almost before the challenge was made she turned away from North Africa. In 1492 Columbus discovered America; crusading and imperial ideals began to focus on the New World, which was soon recognised as a far more fruitful field of empire. Expansion in Africa and America were not irreconcilable; the search for a way to outflank Islam was one of the impulses behind the early voyages of discovery. But Ferdinand also had interests in Europe, and possessed claims against France as well as

[24] A. de la Torre, 'Los Reyes Católicos y Granada', *Hispania*, xv. (1944), 244–307, xvi. (1944) 339–82.

against Islam. Indeed France was the more immediate enemy and pressed Aragon too closely for her comfort. Having exploited the difficulties of Ferdinand's father in Navarre and Catalonia, she took the counties of Roussillon and Cerdagne, the remains of Aragonese possessions in Languedoc, while in Castile Louis XI backed Isabella's enemies. Ferdinand was aware of this pressure and he persuaded Isabella to renounce the traditional Castilian policy of alliance with France and bring her kingdom into line with the anti-French policy of Aragon.

But Ferdinand was no war-monger; he preferred diplomacy. Using the prestige of his position as king of Castile, from as early as 1475 he began to seek allies in key positions surrounding France—in England, the Low Countries, and Germany—developing for the purpose a system of resident ambassadors hitherto unknown outside Italy.[25] Eventually he concerted an active alliance with the emperor Maximilian, sealed by the marriage of his daughter Joanna, with Maximilian's son, the archduke Philip (1496). This was only one of the many marriage alliances in which the Catholic Monarchs ruthlessly traded their children. But it was to prove the most decisive, for it not only gave Spain her future dynasty but began her tragic association with northern and central Europe. This was not apparent in 1496, for although the House of Habsburg brought together the imperial crown of Germany and the duchy of Burgundy in the person of the emperor Maximilian, Joanna was not heir to the kingdoms of the Catholic Monarchs. By 1500, however, death had reduced the ranks of their children, and Joanna was heir apparent. And in the same year her son and heir, Prince Charles, was born, and it was he who was to secure the Habsburg inheritance. Aragonese hostility towards France, therefore, had brought Spain a long way from Granada and the Mediterranean. And Ferdinand was prepared to go even further. To complete the encirclement of France in the north he prepared an alliance with England which resulted in the marriage of his daughter Catherine with the son of Henry VII in 1501. By this time, however, France had begun to break through Ferdinand's diplomatic defences in the south. Having returned the counties of Roussillon and Cerdagne to Aragon, Charles VIII launched his army into Italy to claim the kingdom of Naples in 1494. Again he found himself confronted by Ferdinand. The latter had strengthened his diplomatic representation in Rome and Venice, and now he countered French action by an alliance with Venice, Pope Alexander VI, the Duke of Milan, and the Emperor Maximilian. This he sanctioned with a powerful Spanish army

[25] G. Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (London, 1955), pp. 138–52. On the foreign policy of the Catholic Monarchs see also A. de la Torre, *Documentos sobre las relaciones internacionales de los Reyes Católicos* (3 vols., Madrid, 1949–51); J. M. Doussinague, *La política internacional de Fernando el Católico* (Madrid, 1944).



SPAIN IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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commanded by Gonzalo de Córdoba, who brilliantly defeated the French at Cerignola (1503) and Garigliano (1504). So Naples fell not to France but to Spain. The victory was a sign of the times, for it was made possible by the decisive intervention of the Castilian army. This was further proof, if proof were needed, of the power inherent in the union of Castile and Aragon, and the success of their collaboration. The Castilian army was hitherto unknown outside the peninsula; now, after its apprenticeship in the war of Granada and its successful trial in the Italian campaign, it was the most powerful instrument of war in Europe.

With the conquest of Naples Spain was to remain firmly rooted in Italy and in the Mediterranean. Expansion in this direction was traditional for Aragon, whose coasts, trade, and existing possessions (the Balearics, Sardinia, and Sicily) committed her to preserving her power and her communications in the western Mediterranean. And in 1504 Naples was a valuable acquisition, not only strategically but also in revenue and agricultural resources. But possession of Naples not only involved Spain in Italy and thence in a bitter struggle with France; it also took her closer to Islam, almost to the frontier of Christendom, at a time when the expansion of the Ottoman empire had already begun to threaten the security of Italy. So Naples brought new commitments as well as new resources. It also brought new problems of defence. To move eastwards without securing the North African flank was a risky procedure, as it left communications between Spain and Italy exposed to any power which dominated the Barbary coast. Could Spain beat the Turk to North Africa? Or had she neglected her immediate interests in a vital area for too long? Before these questions could be answered the union of her own kingdoms was put to its severest test.

The conquest of Naples coincided with the end of the joint reign of Ferdinand and Isabella. On 26 November 1504 the queen died. She had never admitted the rights of her husband to the crown of Castile. Now, with characteristic stubbornness, she excluded him from the succession. In spite of the fact that their daughter and heir, Joanna, had already shown signs of the mental illness which was to render her permanently unfit to rule, she was declared successor with her husband, Philip of Austria. But even Isabella, for all her Castilian regard for the letter of the law, was not unaware that Ferdinand had thirty years' experience in the government of Castile. Therefore, in the case of Joanna's absence or inability to govern, and until her son Charles came of age to rule, Ferdinand was to be governor and administrator of Castile. In this way Isabella tried to vindicate the Castilian laws of succession, which excluded Ferdinand, and at the same time give Castile the security of his government, rather than that of the alien Philip, should Joanna prove unfit to rule. The results of such folly were only to be expected. Without

the title of king, Ferdinand was disarmed. The ambitious Philip was determined to oust him, and a strong party emerged in Castile hostile to 'the old Catalan', who was forced to retire like a fugitive, to be replaced by a foreign prince and his deranged queen. For the moment, thanks to the retrogressive action of Isabella, the ambitions of the Habsburgs, and the separatist attitude of Castile, the two crowns were severed again. Ferdinand had no alternative but to look to his own interests and salvage what he could for Aragon. By the treaty of Blois (1505) he allied himself with France and secured a marriage with Germaine de Foix, niece of the French king, who renounced his rights to Naples; and he threw Castilians, including Gonzalo de Córdoba, out of high office in the Italian kingdom. The risk now was that, should the new marriage yield an heir for the crown of Aragon, the separation of the two kingdoms would be complete.[26] The cause of unity, attacked on all sides, was only saved by a combination of largely fortuitous events—the death of Philip I (September 1506) shortly after the beginning of the new reign, the unequivocal madness of Joanna, and the infertility of Ferdinand's second marriage. The young Charles, heir of Joanna and fruit of Ferdinand's alliance with the Habsburgs, was left as the sole heir of both kingdoms. Meanwhile, to solve the problem of government in Castile Ferdinand was welcomed back by a Council of Regency presided over by Ximénez.

The nine years (1507–16) during which Ferdinand ruled alone were, if anything, more favourable to the cause of unification than those of his joint government with Isabella. Inevitably it was difficult to overcome the traditional lines of demarcation assigned to the respective crowns—an Atlantic policy limited to Castile and a North African policy associated with Aragon and Catalonia. America, where the crown had employed Aragonese as well as Castilian personnel and resources, was still conceived as a Castilian enterprise and a monopoly which it had to preserve for its own subjects. Similarly, in spite of the co-operation of Castile, the conquests in North Africa were regarded as acquisitions of Aragon and Catalonia.

The policy of expansion in North Africa had already begun before the death of Isabella.[27] Melilla had been won in 1497. But other enterprises, notably in Italy, had diverted the monarchs from action in Africa. This was largely Ferdinand's responsibility, though Isabella showed no more sense of urgency than her husband, and the famous dictum attributed to her in her testament—'the future of Spain is in Africa'—is an invention, like many of its kind. But in the years immediately after her death, with the collaboration of Cardinal Ximénez and drawing on the resources of Castile as well as of

[26] J. M. Doussinague, *Fernando el Católico y Germana de Foix* (Madrid, 1944).

[27] See P. Prieto y Llovera, *Política aragonesa en Africa hasta la muerte de Fernando el Católico* (Madrid, 1952).

Aragon, Ferdinand launched a series of expeditions across the Mediterranean. In 1515 Mers-el-Kebir was taken; in 1508 Peñón de la Gómera; the years 1509–11 saw the conquest of Oran, Bugia and Tripoli, and the submission of Algiers. Economically, of course, prospects in North Africa were meagre compared with those in America; Catalonia was assigned free and exclusive commerce with the new outposts and given protection against foreign competition, but the potential wealth which Castile possessed in the New World was far more attractive. This accounts in part for the failure to sustain the effort of expansion southwards. Yet strategically the area was vital for Spain's political and commercial security in the Mediterranean. To this extent her foothold in Africa—a few stations perched precariously on the coast with no penetration into the interior—was dangerously weak, and incapable of containing the combined power of the Turk and the Barbary states, soon to bestride the Mediterranean. Then it would be seen that in this direction, which was a natural and basic one for Spain, her action had been too little and too late.

Backward in the south, Ferdinand displayed greater determination in securing his frontier in the north. When the death of Gaston de Foix opened the succession question in Navarre, he reinforced the claims of his second wife with an army commanded by the Duke of Alba which quickly occupied the kingdom (1512). The acquisition of Navarre, separated from the other Spanish kingdoms since the twelfth century, completed the unification of Spain. After being briefly incorporated in the crown of Aragon (1512–15) it was then assigned to Castile; this was in keeping with Ferdinand's policy of recognising the supremacy of the larger kingdom and a sign perhaps that absolutism was prevailing over regional immunities which might have been nurtured in Navarre through association with the eastern kingdoms. Again, however, Ferdinand saw no reason why he should break traditional institutions; there was a Council of Navarre to attend to the administration of the kingdom, its own cortes continued to function, and its permanent *Diputación*, or committee of estates, operated still. These things were less important in Ferdinand's eyes than Spanish security in the Pyrenees; another blow had been struck at France, and another opportunity for French intervention removed.

The acquisition of Navarre, in fact, was the fruit not only of Ferdinand's military strength but also of his diplomacy. His skilful use of both placed Spain in a powerful position abroad and marked the direction her policy was to take for some time to come. In contemporary alliances he was usually on the winning side, first in the League of Cambrai against Venice (1508) when he redeemed the Adriatic ports of the kingdom of Naples, and then in the Holy League against France (1511–13) when he was interested less in

Italy than in Spain itself and took possession of Navarre. In these years also he sought to maintain the English alliance with his son-in-law Henry VIII, an alliance directed primarily against France and its new king, Francis I, whose expansionist aims in Italy were dangerous to Spanish interests. So Ferdinand left France enclosed within a diplomatic barrier based on Spain, England, Germany, and the Low Countries, and blocked the way southwards to Italy. His successor, Charles I, understood the meaning of this policy and sought to continue it. Charles, in fact, was to inherit not only the political unity preserved by Ferdinand but also the principles of foreign policy which he had elaborated with such success. To this extent the substance of his rule had already been prepared.

Ferdinand died on 23 January 1516. Almost immediately the anarchic instincts of the aristocracy and the towns, so laboriously repressed by the Catholic Monarchs, began to stir again. But the redoubtable Ximénez, whom Ferdinand had appointed Regent, saw Spain safely through the critical months that followed, suppressing incipient disorder, preserving the royal power intact, and transmitting to Charles his Spanish inheritance as it had been left by the Catholic Monarchs. The inheritance, like their reign, was complex. In retrospect the policy of Ferdinand and Isabella was a strange mixture of purpose and diffidence. They did not lead Spain in an undeviating line from feudal anarchy to nation state, nor was their political system a monolithic one. The monarchy they restored was far from centralised and still not absolute. The enterprise of their actions abroad, especially beyond the Atlantic, contrasted starkly with their cautious approach to domestic problems. The Spain they left to their successors abounded still in political and social anomalies, barriers deeply embedded between the constituent kingdoms, and even more rigid divisions between the different classes within each country. They had done no more, in fact, than provide the minimum conditions of order and unity. But in doing this they had solved the problems of state-building sooner than most of their contemporaries in western Europe. In the revival of royal power, in the development of instruments of government, in the creation of a powerful military machine, in the reform of the church, all of which were accomplished or initiated within a single generation, Spain had a tremendous start on any of her rivals. All these efforts, however, had been geared to the immediate demands of power, and in the interests of power some dangerous short-cuts had been taken. In particular, social and economic welfare had been ruthlessly sacrificed to political strength. Yet, in spite of this, a feeling of national euphoria and a sense of boundless optimism filled the Spain of the Catholic Monarchs. How would this spirit respond to the inexperienced rule of an alien prince?

CHAPTER II

CHARLES I OF SPAIN

1. The Burgundian Prince

On 18 September 1517, when the fleet of forty ships bringing the young Charles and his Burgundian court to Spain anchored off the coast of Asturias, the local inhabitants fled to the hills armed with staves and knives and only returned when their scouts reported the arrival not of an enemy but of their king. The incident was a strange sign of the reception that awaited Charles in his new kingdom, and as the royal party struggled across the rain-swept mountains of northern Spain towards Valladolid, the seventeen-year-old monarch, already sickened by the journey, had time to reflect on the dourness of the country and the suspicion of its people.

By a combination of dynastic marriages and premature deaths, Charles was destined to be the ruler of a world empire, but in 1517 his succession to the heart of that empire looked far from secure. From his father Philip of Burgundy, whom he had lost at the age of six, he had already inherited the first of his many dominions, the Low Countries. This included not only Luxembourg, Brabant, Flanders, Holland, Zeeland, Hainault, and Artois, but also Franche-Comté and a claim to the Duchy of Burgundy itself which had reverted to the crown of France. In January 1515 the young prince, whose Habsburg blood was already apparent in his hanging jaw and gaping look, was proclaimed ruler in the Netherlands. Within a year his maternal grandfather, Ferdinand of Aragon, was dead: as son of Queen Joanna, whose madness rendered her incompetent to rule, Charles could now claim the throne of Castile and its possessions in America, while from Ferdinand himself he inherited the crown of Aragon-Catalonia which included Sicily, Sardinia, Naples and some outposts in North Africa. As grandson of the emperor Maximilian, he was also heir presumptive to the Habsburg estates of Austria, Tyrol, and parts of southern Germany, and these he received on Maximilian's death in January 1519. 'God has set you on the path towards a world monarchy' his grand chancellor Gattinara told him in 1519, and given the extent of the dominions united under the sovereignty of Charles I of Spain, now elected the Emperor Charles V of Germany, the words seemed only appropriate.

In spite of the future imperial preoccupations of Charles V, however, the two most dominating features of his reign were his Burgundian origins and his Spanish inheritance.[1] And of all the countries he inherited, Spain proved the most difficult to claim. Born in Ghent (24 February 1500), Charles was a stranger to Spain and spoke no Spanish. There were few Spaniards among his household in Brussels. His education, in which he absorbed a mixture of chivalry, piety, and concern for his dynasty, had been a Burgundian one, and his apprenticeship in the art of government had been directed by the Burgundian nobleman, Guillaume de Croy, Lord of Chièvres, who even slept in the same room as his shy and solemn charge. Yet there was more to Charles's foreignness than language and upbringing. Already during 1516 when the young king lingered in the Netherlands while the Regent Ximénez de Cisneros was trying to extract him from the hands of Flemings and bring him to Spain in order to govern there, important Spanish offices were being granted or sold to Flemings in the king's following, and Spanish money was going to Brussels to finance the Burgundian court. There were other reasons for the Regent's anxiety. In the absence of a sovereign's hand, the Castilian nobility was restless, the towns were ready to take up arms in defence of their privileges, and there was no source of patronage with which to placate important interests and bind a following to the new king's cause. Indeed there were many in Spain who preferred Charles's younger brother, the Infante Ferdinand, who had been brought up in Spain and was popular there. The Council of Castile itself had strongly opposed the idea that Charles should take the title of king during his mother's lifetime and had yielded only because it could do little about it.

2. Opposition: Cortes and Comuneros

By the summer of 1517 when Chièvres, having secured relations with France and England, decided that it was time to undertake the journey to Spain, it was clear that the Burgundians had won the struggle for control of the king. After Charles's arrival in Spain this was apparent from his curt and ungrateful dismissal of Ximénez in a dispatch which the aged cardinal never lived to read. It could also be seen in the way Burgundians continued

[1] No modern account of Charles V does justice to his rule in Spain, but the outstanding work on his reign as a whole is that of K. Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V* (Eng. trans., London, 1939). Brandi was primarily interested in German problems and his account of Spanish history of the period does not supersede the careful researches of R. B. Merriman, *The Rise of the Spanish Empire in the Old World and the New*, vol. iii. *The Emperor*. For a more recent account see R. Tyler, *The Emperor Charles the Fifth* (London, 1956). A masterly survey of Charles's empire is provided by H. Koenigsberger, 'The Empire of Charles V in Europe', *New Cambridge Modern History*, ii. (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 301–33.

to receive the most valuable favours and to be retained as the principal counsellors of the silent and impassive boy whom it was impossible to approach except through Chièvres. Castilians were kept at a distance from their king and were forced to watch offices and sinecures invaded by newcomers and the national wealth plundered by foreigners who neither understood nor cared for the problems of Spain. Naturally they reacted. At the first meeting of the Castilian cortes in Valladolid (February 1518), the very presidency of which the king had given to a Walloon, Jean de Sauvage, indignant protests were voiced. Led by Juan de Zumel, the representative of Burgos, the cortes rejected the presence of foreigners in their deliberations. In spite of threats Zumel persisted in his resistance in the following sessions: the king was requested to respect the laws of Castile, to remove foreigners from his service and to learn and speak Spanish. Charles did indeed swear to respect the laws of Castile, but in so far as the cortes, lacking any means of constitutional resistance, granted him a subsidy of 600,000 ducats for three years without conditions, this was yet another victory for the Burgundian party.

When Charles presented himself in Aragon in the spring of 1518 the pressures on him were more complex. The Aragonese cortes were even less anxious than those of Castile to give formal recognition of the king during his mother's lifetime. Moreover, there were still separatists in Aragon, those who looked back to the times before the union with Castile, and who saw in the Infante Ferdinand an answer to their hopes. Charles had already sent his too-popular brother out of the country to the Netherlands, but now he was requested by the cortes that at the same time as they swore to Charles as king they should swear to his brother as prince-heir. Such a suggestion outraged the Castilians accompanying Charles and caused some minor disturbances between them and Aragonese in Zaragoza. And it was January 1519 before the cortes of Aragon recognised Charles as king, conjointly with his mother, and voted him a grant of 200,000 ducats.

In Catalonia the issues between Charles and his new subjects involved even longer and more obstinate negotiations. Here, too, there were objections to his Flemish advisers and the inevitable quarrels over procedure and money. Moreover, the Catalan cortes were a more effective instrument for resisting royal power than those of Castile, and with their right of dissent and their established procedure they could be much more difficult about money and legislation. Charles had to spend a year in Barcelona and he was there when news arrived that he had been elected Emperor on 28 June 1519.

Charles's determination to secure the imperial title arose partly from the fear of its falling to Francis I of France who, with power in Germany as well

as in France, would be able to threaten not only Charles's Burgundian inheritance but also his Habsburg dominions. He was also possibly aware of his own need of the title because of the variety of his possessions which he ruled with a diversity of titles; the office of emperor would provide at least a symbol of unity. Above all, however, he believed that the imperial title was his of right, to crown the kingdoms of the most powerful ruler in Christendom, the very extent of whose dominions rendered him the one most qualified for it. Charles had to spend one million gold florins on this election in order to give the electors financial as well as political reasons for electing him, and the entire operation left him in debt to the Fuggers for half-a-million florins. But it was Chièvres, and not a Spaniard, who had negotiated his election, and if some Spaniards realised the possibilities of the empire of Charles V it was by no means certain that it pleased or impressed the majority of his Spanish subjects. What they wanted was a Spanish king of their own, not a share in a foreign emperor. Consequently, although there were signs that the Burgundian régime might be a transitory one—especially after the death of the rapacious Sauvage in June 1518 and his replacement as grand chancellor by the Piedmontese Mercurino Gattinara, humanist and Erasmist, and himself a passionate advocate of the imperial idea—there was now added a greater and more permanent cause of resentment.

This was felt above all in Castile, where hostility to the new sovereign, his ministers and his policy took the form of a collective opposition based on the towns and led by Toledo. In order to prepare to take up the imperial crown by raising money and embarking for the Netherlands, Charles returned from Barcelona to Castile and summoned the cortes to meet at Santiago in March 1520. Representatives of Toledo did not appear at this cortes and the other towns tried to bind their deputies with precise instructions: the court, on the other hand, wished them to have a free—and an open—hand. The cortes in fact refused to grant the subsidy requested by the king and against all constitutional precedent they insisted on the discussion of grievances before the granting of supply. Thereupon the cortes were prorogued to La Coruña, and it was there that Charles presented the case in which later historians have seen the germ of his imperial programme. Dr. La Mota, bishop of Badajoz, one of the few Spanish followers of Charles from his Brussels days, lectured the cortes: 'Now is returned the ancient glory of Spain . . . By God's grace our Spanish King is made King of the Romans and Emperor of the World.'[2] It was argued that Charles had accepted the imperial crown in order to undertake the defence of the Catholic Faith against its infidel enemies, and that Spain would always remain his base and

[2] *Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y Castilla* (5 vols., Madrid, 1861–1903), ii. 293.

the source of his strength.[3] This looked more a desperate attempt to gain money by flattery than the submission of a considered imperial programme. On either score, however, it failed to impress the cortes, and even when a majority of the deputies had been bribed into approving the subsidy, it was against the opposition of the representatives of six towns and the abstention of all but eight out of the total of eighteen. The money itself was never collected and mobs attacked the houses of deputies who had voted for it. Moreover, the poor impression that Charles had initially made on Spaniards was now worsened.

When Charles left Spain in May 1520, surrounded by foreigners and on a mission that his Spanish subjects regarded as essentially alien, agitation had already broken out into rebellion. An accumulation of grievances against the Burgundian régime had produced the first sense of outrage: the poor impression made by the king and his foreign agents, Chièvres' contempt for Spaniards, his venal monopoly of patronage, the appointment of foreigners to Spanish offices and bishoprics, the oppression of tax-collectors, the great quantities of money taken out of the kingdom, and to crown all, the appointment of a foreign regent, Adrian of Utrecht, to govern Castile in the king's absence.[4] The climax came when Charles committed himself to an imperial idea that had little place in the traditions of Spain and found little response there.[5] The gentry and townsmen of Castile then revolted against a régime which they regarded as inimical to their interests, and which threatened to sacrifice Castile to an imperial or dynastic policy. But this was not simply a political movement. The revolt of the *comuneros* was a revolution; it occurred in a region deeply divided by opposing interests and within a society already in conflict with itself.[6]

Manufacturing industry of the artisan kind had long been established in Castile, and textiles took the lead. But the textile industry was stagnant at the

[3] See B. Chudoba, *Spain and the Empire 1519–1653* (Chicago, 1952), p. 20, who, however, in describing Charles's declaration to the cortes as 'the real programme of a statesman', probably exaggerates its significance.

[4] These grievances and the discontent they engendered were not confined to scholars and learned counsellors of the time as suggested by Brandi, *op. cit.*, p. 84, but were widespread and deeply felt.

[5] On the other hand see the thesis argued by R. Menéndez Pidal, *Idea imperial de Carlos V* (Madrid, 1945), who claims Charles as a very Spanish figure and bases his policy, though unconvincingly, in Spanish tradition. On the opposition of Spanish political theorists, including Francisco de Vitoria, to the imperial idea, see J. A. Maravall, *Carlos V y el pensamiento político del renacimiento* (Madrid, 1960), pp. 235–68.

[6] See the authoritative account of the subject by Joseph Perez, *La revolución de las Comunidades de Castilla (1520–1521)* (Madrid, 1977), amply seconded in its conclusions by Juan Ignacio Gutiérrez Nieto, *Las Comunidades como movimiento antiseñorial* (Barcelona, 1973).

beginning of the sixteenth century, starved of capital and short of skilled labour, deprived of protection and unable to compete with better quality foreign goods. Industry took second place to more powerful interests. The production and export of raw wool simultaneously satisfied the aristocracy whose estates produced it, the merchants who exported it, the crown who taxed it, and the foreign businessmen who bought it. The greater part of wool production thus went abroad and domestic manufacturers were too weak to compete for it or to challenge the coalition of interests which made Castile an exporter of raw materials and thwarted the development of a national textile industry. As their position worsened, manufacturers looked in vain to the crown; neither Isabella nor Charles V was inclined to assist them. Wool exports from Burgos-Bilbao flourished, as did the Indies trade of Seville, while the interior of Castile was increasingly marginalised. This was the area of the *comuneros* and these were the interests in conflict, manufacturers against wool exporters, the centre against the periphery, Segovia, which supported the revolt, against Burgos, which soon abandoned it.

The *comuneros* were members of the middle ranks of society, in revolt against the landed aristocracy and their allies. Yet it was not a simple struggle of commoners against nobles, nor a mere protest against an unpopular régime and its servants. Rather it revealed the underlying divisions in Castilian society which came to the surface after the reign of the Catholic Monarchs. While Ferdinand and Isabella distrusted the higher aristocracy and sought to curb them, they favoured and promoted the lower nobility, the *caballeros* and *hidalgos*, who came to occupy an important role in the administration, the army and local government. But many of these were rejected by the new monarch in 1517 and, in a mood of resentment, some of them joined the *comuneros*. They were not a middle class; whether they were rural *hidalgos* or urban *letrados*, they considered themselves true nobles or, like the great merchants and bankers, they aspired to nobility. On the other hand the *comuneros* included smaller merchants and manufacturers, and these did constitute an incipient middle class, though they were few in numbers in the polarised society of Castile. The succession crisis following the death of Isabella and the long vacuum of royal power in 1504–17 enabled the aristocracy of Castile to improve their fortunes and make a bid for power at the expense of the weakened state. At the same time the more vulnerable economic interests tried to improve their position, the merchants of the interior cities against the monopoly *consulado* of Burgos and the foreign merchants, the industrialists against the exporters, national manufacturers against the exporters of raw wool. During the regency of the king of Aragon Castilian textile producers received some favours against foreign importers and excessive export of raw wool, a policy continued by Cardinal Cisneros.

This was a new stage in the balance of economic power, the first protest of the central zone of Castile against the privileged periphery. The next stage was more violent.

The revolt of the *comuneros* was led by Toledo which had already, before Charles left Spain on 20 May 1520, expelled its *corregidor* and established a *comunidad*, or commune. In the course of June the revolt spread to most of the cities of Old Castile where one by one they expelled royal officials and tax-collectors and proclaimed a *comunidad*. These were spontaneous popular revolts, though the urban patriciate also participated and at Zamora the movement was headed by a fighting bishop, Antonio de Acuña. Toledo took the initiative in extending the political base of the movement and in the course of July convoked a meeting of four cities in Avila; from this emerged a revolutionary junta which drove the regent Adrian from Valladolid and set up a rival government. In September 1520 it reached the peak of its power; with a cause, an organisation and an army, it no longer requested reforms but sought to impose conditions on the king. At this point divisions opened between revolutionaries and reformers. The junta maintained that the kingdom stood above the king and that the junta represented the kingdom; it thereby alienated the moderates in Burgos and Valladolid, who were also subject to considerable pressure from the royal authorities and the higher nobility. As the junta began to claim all the powers of the state, the moderates moved away, and the royal forces moved in. With the help of the aristocracy and timely remittances from Portugal, on 5 December they took Tordesillas, the headquarters of the junta. But the *comuneros* were not yet defeated. Now their revolution was not simply a political movement but a social one; it was more than a conflict between the cities and royal power, it was a confrontation with the higher nobility and the big merchants. Charles V had been shrewd enough to associate the Admiral of Castile, Fadrique Enríquez, and the Constable, Iñigo de Velasco, with Adrian of Utrecht as co-governors of the country, and through them to associate the Castilian magnates with the royal cause. In the field the *comuneros* were no match for the royal army and the forces of the nobility, and they were defeated at the battle of Villalar on 24 April 1521. On the following day the leaders of the revolt, Juan de Padilla, Juan Bravo, and Pedro Maldonado, representatives respectively of Toledo, Segovia and Salamanca, were executed. As for the aristocracy, they now began to claim their rewards and pensions; but their presence at Villalar was not merely a service, it was a defence of their own interests. Toledo held out for another six months, with forces commanded by the last rebel chief, Bishop Acuña, who was welcomed by the whole town with shouts of 'Comunidad! Comunidad! Acuña! Acuña!'. The Admiral of Castile described this as the support of the Jews and the populace, using the two

worst insults he could think of. But Acuña only lasted a month; he was captured and imprisoned in the castle of Simancas, on the battlements of which he was eventually garrotted after a violent attempt to escape. In October 1821 Toledo too had to capitulate.

By this time the social base of the *comuneros* had emerged more clearly. The rank and file came from the urban popular sectors, taking action against the traditional oligarchy of the towns; this was commons versus patricians. But the urban nobles were only part of the nobility. The grandees and the higher aristocracy also took action against the *comuneros*, on behalf of law and order and to restore their own power where that had been eroded. They were not closely concerned with the rights of Charles V, whom they did not admire, and as long as the *comuneros* confined themselves to challenging royal power most of the nobles were indifferent. But there developed alongside the political wing of the *comuneros* a radical anti-seigneurial movement which challenged the feudal power of the nobility. This was a revolution from below, a rising of the nobles' vassals. A group of great lords began to arm themselves in defence of seigneurial rights. This forced the *comunero* leaders to harden their attitude and take to arms. The movement then assumed the character of a social revolution, in which the *comuneros* fought not only against royal power but against aristocratic privilege and supremacy. In places it was a war without quarter; castles were destroyed, property sacked, and urban forces received enthusiastic support from the rural people as they struggled to free themselves from feudal burdens. Thus the grandees fought not only to serve the king but to defend their seigneurial jurisdiction.

Meanwhile, the middle sectors of the towns—small property owners, artisans, retail traders, university graduates—remained at the heart of the *comunero* movement and supplied its leadership. They were not poor; some of them had land, others professions, and they did not identify easily with the underprivileged. But nor were they rich, and they had little in common with the wealthy export merchants, allies of the nobility against the *comuneros*. So the middle sectors were not a homogeneous social class, an urban bourgeoisie, and while the *comuneros* had a social base they did not have a class base. It was a struggle between different sectorial interests, and each side constituted a coalition of groups or a political alliance. The programme of the *comuneros* offered something for most of its supporters—limitation of royal power, curbs on the aristocracy, reduction of taxes, restraints on government spending and corruption, and reform of the municipalities in order to give greater participation to the non-privileged sectors, the *comunidad*. They also demanded a reduction of the export of raw wool in favour of domestic purchasers, and protection for the Castilian textile industry. Here

spoke the manufacturers and artisans of Segovia, Palencia, Cuenca and other cities of the interior, against all those who profited from the export of raw wool, the sheep farmers, the noble owners of sheep land, the merchants of Burgos and foreign businessmen. In 1520 royal power aligned itself unequivocally with this coalition of dominant interests, mindful that the customs duty derived from these exports was an important part of its revenue and that the crown's Flemish subjects wanted Spanish wool and access to Spanish markets. But, if in crushing the *comuneros*, Charles V received the collaboration of the grandees and nobles, he did not subsequently satisfy their ambitions or give them the power they wanted. It was a victory of the aristocracy over the townsmen, but the prize was taken by the king.

Meanwhile Charles V had another revolt on his hands. But whereas the *comuneros* had an organisation, leaders and ideas, the risings of the *Germanías*, or Christian brotherhoods, of Valencia and Mallorca in 1519 were spontaneous social protests making instant demands which never really developed into a political programme.[7] There was no influence from one movement to the other; the *Germanías* did not co-operate with the *comuneros* and their revolt had a different origin. The movement in Valencia began as a protest against city officials and aristocrats, and violence then spilled over into open war against the Muslims, who in turn supported their lords against the brotherhoods. The leaders of the revolt saw the advantage of invoking a religious justification for their action and giving it a more general appeal than it originally possessed. For social tensions in Valencia were not simple class conflicts, and this was not a homogeneous rebellion. It included artisans fighting for survival and perhaps for protection, peasants oppressed by feudal burdens, a few middle-sector representatives with political awareness, some lower clergy, all of these united only in their experience of poor living conditions and seigneurial abuses and also perhaps in their hatred of Muslims, whom they were only too ready to attack, plunder and convert.

In 1519 the gilds of Valencia had been armed to oppose a threatened attack by Turkish pirates. At the same time an outbreak of plague emptied the city of much of the nobility, including the governor himself. The emperor too was an absentee ruler, repeatedly postponing the meeting of the cortes of Valencia. In these circumstances, the people took the opportunity to strike at an oppressive nobility and unpopular officials. They demanded representation in municipal government, which they still did not have,

[7] See L. Piles Ros, 'Aspectos sociales de la Germanía de Valencia', *Estudios de historia social de Espana*, ii. (1952), 431–78, and the modern study by Ricardo García Cárcel, *Las Germanías de Valencia* (Barcelona, 1975), pp. 20–40, 62–88, 164–87.

and justice before the emperor, which was denied them by their local overlords. The early leader of the *Germanía*, Juan Llorenz, a weaver, wanted to give Valencia a republican constitution like that of Genoa and Venice. After his death, however, lesser men led the movement into violence and atrocities without a clear programme. The insurgents soon controlled the capital of Valencia, with the support of almost all the gilds, and from there they directed a rising in the rest of the kingdom of Valencia, launching armies against the viceroy and nobles, forcing the Moors to be baptised, suppressing all taxes and threatening to intervene in the distribution of property. At this point the rebellion lost some of the middle-class support from which it had drawn much of its strength and many of its leaders. This enabled the viceroy, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, and his aristocratic supporters to retrieve the situation and destroy the forces of the *Germanía* in October 1521. The royal victory was inevitably followed by a bitter repression in which more than eight hundred rebels were sentenced—mostly to fines and confiscations–for the 'crime of *germanía* and popular union'. But it was not until December 1524 that all resistance outside the capital was overcome and a new viceroy, Germaine de Foix, published a pardon.

Although the *Germanía* of Valencia eventually clashed with royal power, it had begun as a protest against the power of the landed aristocracy and against their Moorish tenants and labourers. It also received much middle-class support and the co-operation of almost all the gilds. The movement lacked a distinct social base. It was a heterogeneous alliance of protesting groups, poor craftsmen and artisans, small farmers and labourers, lower clergy and a few merchants; it was a rising of primitive rebels; it was a peasant protest against subsistence shortage, seigneurial jurisdiction and competition from morisco labour; it was a criticism of the local administration and an attack on taxes; and it displayed a few symptoms of real revolution and opposition to existing structures. It was also indirectly a movement of resistance to the crown: the aristocracy and the higher clergy, knowing where their interests lay, gave their unanimous support to Charles V, and for this reason the suppression of the movement was yet another victory for absolutism.

3. The Subjection of Castile

The risings in eastern Spain did not bring royal retribution on the institutions of those kingdoms and they managed to preserve their older rights and privileges even in the new world of the Habsburgs. Their *fueros*, or regional prerogatives, were based firmly in their cortes. The General Cortes of the realms of the crown of Aragon met six times in the reign of Charles V,

as opposed to the individual cortes of each component part, Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia, which rarely met. The former were general only in name, in that they were all held for the sake of convenience in Monzón, but even there the cortes of each of the three countries sat separately and the emperor had in effect to deal with three different bodies. Moreover, the rights of procedure, taxation, and legislation enjoyed by each of these cortes continued to restrain absolute sovereignty.[8] They were always reluctant to vote the emperor large sums of money and when a subsidy was granted one-third of the amount voted was almost invariably set aside for internal purposes and therefore left in the hands of the cortes. For this reason there existed in Aragon and Catalonia standing committees of the estates, which remained in session during intervals between cortes in order to control the administration of the revenue voted and watch over the observance of laws. Yet the influence of the cortes did not stop there. In Aragon they also exercised a large measure of control over that characteristic Aragonese institution, the office of *Justicia*, which although it was declining in prestige and in authority, was potentially one of the greatest obstacles to the exercise of sovereignty in Aragon. The *Justicia* existed to protect subjects against public and private injustice and could even intervene in trials if they were considered contrary to the *fueros* of Aragon. He was a mixture of a chief justice and a judge of appeal, whose peculiar position often made him look like an arbiter between crown and subjects, and to whom all Aragonese had the right of appeal.

It would be a mistake to regard the institutions of Aragon and Catalonia as popular or democratic ones. Many of the privileges they were defending were the monopoly of a nobility who still commanded considerable seigneurial jurisdiction and whose feudal rights survived longer than those of most nobilities in western Europe. The rising of the *Germanías* of Valencia had drawn attention to aristocratic control of local institutions. Moreover, as has been seen, if these institutions were able to defend the eastern kingdoms against abuse of royal power, it was largely because the crown had little material inducement to challenge them. From Aragon and Catalonia Charles V received the revenues of the royal patrimony and the grants voted by the cortes. The latter were careful to prevent the introduction of new taxes, it is true, but Charles was never likely to force the issue, for there was little wealth to be taxed, and certainly not enough to justify provoking a crisis. Aragon was a relatively poor country, and the commercial prosperity of Catalonia had declined with the loss of its influence in the Mediterranean and the expansion of Turkish power there.[9] The immunity of the eastern kingdoms, therefore, survived less because of their constitutional strength

[8] See above, pp. 9–10.

[9] See below, pp. 148–49.

than because of their economic weakness. Protective institutions carry little significance when there is little for them to protect. Like his predecessors, Charles V had greater resources elsewhere, especially in Castile, a very powerful reason why it was Castile that was converted into the base of his empire, or, to use the words of Bishop Mota to the unresponsive cortes of 1520, into 'its treasury and its sword', and why it was the institutions of Castile that received the emperor's closest attention. When there was wealth at stake the crown acted decisively.

The defeat of Villalar left Castile even more exposed to absolutism than it had been before. The *comuneros* had been concerned not only with objectives but also with means; the revolt was not only a protest against Spain's involvement in the European and imperial policies of Charles V, it was also an attempt, no matter how vague or rudimentary, to defend the interests of Castile by imposing constitutional checks on royal power. These were now brushed aside and from this moment Castile lay completely at the mercy of its sovereign. Municipal government was already incapable of exercising independent authority. Local elections were far from democratic, but even the elected officers of the towns had little power when face to face with the *corregidores*, those judicial officers who since the reign of the Catholic Monarchs had also been invested with administrative powers and sent to every town in Castile where they acted in effect as royal governors and controlled every aspect of municipal administration. Owing to a decline in the standards of selection, the *corregidores* were now even less popular than they had been in the previous reign and there were growing complaints that the nominees of Charles V were not university-trained jurists but ignorant favourites unable to perform their judicial functions, yet another sign that the crown now viewed them primarily as political agents through whom its authority could reach the mass of the people.

Towns browbeaten by royal *corregidores* and their ally the aristocracy could hardly be expected to send independent representatives to a national cortes. And the cortes of Castile itself were in no position to fulfil a popular function. Although they were divided into three estates—nobles, clergy, and commons—the cortes normally consisted only of the third estate, or more specifically the thirty-six representatives of eighteen towns, as the first two classes were exempt from taxation in terms of their medieval functions, military and spiritual.[10] And as the towns themselves were usually represented by *hidalgos* whose salaries were met from the taxes they voted

[10] *Hidalgos* in Castile were numerous. In the figures for the allocation of the subsidy of 1541 *hidalgos* (exempt) were numbered as 108,358, and *pecheros* (taxpayers) as 784,578. As these figures were for householders, the total might be 540,000 *hidalgos* and 3,923,000 commoners.

but did not have to pay, there was no one to defend their interests against royal demands. Moreover, the principle of redress of grievances before supply of money had never been effectively established in Castile. By the time of Charles V, therefore, the cortes found they had little power to do anything about his demands short of revolt. When the revolt failed at Villalar the immediate consequence of defeat was a further subjection to the sovereign, a further injunction not to withhold funds from the king or try to control their expenditure, and a further refusal to accept deputies with limiting instructions.

When he returned to Spain in 1522 the expenses incurred in his imperial journey and in the revolt of Castile caused Charles to summon a cortes at Valladolid in July 1523 in order to vote another subsidy. On this occasion the cortes made a last attempt to discuss government *before* granting supply, not on the grounds that this was their traditional right but with the naïve argument that Charles himself could authorise the innovation. Not surprisingly Charles refused: 'Yesterday I asked you for funds; today I want your advice.' He then made it clear that this was the order of business he intended to retain.[11] In this way the cortes were reduced to a tax-voting body which the crown of its own grace allowed to present petitions. Altogether the cortes of Castile were called fifteen times in the reign of Charles V, usually as soon as he returned to Spain from his foreign enterprises in search of more money. And although they usually haggled about details and might object to extraordinary demands, they invariably voted Charles the huge subsidies he demanded, as they did in 1523. Their function was only to vote taxes, as they themselves recognised in 1544 when they requested not to be summoned more than once every three years 'on account of the great costs and expense'. Even their right to petition for the enactment of legislation amounted to little, for the king was not obliged to accept their requests much less put them into effect.

Indeed the only resistance that Charles encountered in the cortes of Castile came from the nobility. In 1538 after the debts incurred in his German, North African, and French campaigns, the budget revealed that prospective revenue for the next four years would not even meet the ordinary expenses of government, much less the campaign planned against the Turk. With no new sources of income, the emperor decided to ask his Castilian subjects to impose yet another tax, the *sisa*, or tax on foodstuffs. In September he summoned a cortes in Toledo, to include all three estates on the ground that the contribution was to be a common effort to meet a common danger. The nobility had already refused to be taxed in 1527 on the occasion of the

[11] Merriman, *op. cit.*, iii. 125.

campaign against the Turk in eastern Europe. Then, as now, Charles made it clear that the occasion was unusual. Once again he met with opposition from the nobility who voted that they could not approve the *sisa*, as it was an infringement of their traditional privilege of freedom from taxation; to meet the financial situation the emperor should make peace with France, stay in Spain and cut down his personal spending. The other two estates were more amenable, but from the nobility Charles got nothing, and after this irritating defeat he had to be content with benevolences from his richer subjects in return for *juros*, or bonds settled on future revenues at high interest. He never again attempted to win their approval of his policies or summon them to a cortes. For their part, conscious of their financial immunity, the nobles had no reason to oppose his expensive enterprises, and consequently their concern for peace and limited objectives was confined to occasions when their own pockets were affected; indeed, by joining the growing body of state creditors they might even expect financial gains from an imperial policy which had already enhanced their military prospects. This meant that the burden of empire was largely confined not only to Castile but to the commons of Castile. To this extent Charles V could rule in Spain in alliance with a privileged class which gave him its allegiance as long as its privileges were immune. He followed in effect a policy of divide and rule. But how was that rule imposed?

4. Habsburg Monarchy and its Agents

After the revolt of the *comuneros*, Charles had returned to Spain in 1522 and he spent the next seven years there. In this time he became a Spanish king and laid the foundations of his government. As he steadily grew in stature as a man and a monarch so he began to learn from past mistakes. In 1529, discussing the convenience of going to Italy for his imperial coronation, he remarked with disarming candour that there was much less chance of a rising now than when he had left for the Netherlands in 1520, 'for then I was managed and governed by M. de Chièvres, and I was not old enough to know these kingdoms or experienced enough to govern them. And as I left immediately for Flanders, having spent very little time here, and what is more, being still unmarried and without an heir, it is not surprising that there was scandal and disturbance'.[12] Since that time, however, Charles had made a real effort of adaptation. The language of the monarch and his court became Spanish. His marriage in 1526 to his cousin, Isabella, sister of the

[12] In J. Sánchez Montes, 'Actitudes del español en la época de Carlos V', *Estudios Americanos*, iii. (1951), 193.

king of Portugal, was pleasing to his Spanish subjects, and on 21 May 1527 the empress bore him a son, the future Philip II. Spaniards came to appreciate the human qualities of their king and to recognise the growing authority with which he spoke and acted. And even when they disapproved of his preoccupations with wider interests than their own, they sympathised with him for the enormous burden that he carried. Indeed from some of his subjects he received not only loyalty but gratitude. For he had begun to compromise over foreign advisers, and gradually Spaniards, who had begun as a minority in his service, came to monopolise the fruits of office not only in Spain but also in the constituent parts of his empire.

Yet although Spain was part of a larger empire, it was governed by a Spanish and not by an imperial organisation. Charles V's empire, or *monarquía* as contemporaries called it, united a number of countries under the rule of one person who was king of many kingdoms rather than emperor of the whole. As the great Spanish jurist, Juan de Solórzano later put it, 'the kingdoms have to be ruled and governed as if the king who keeps them together were only the king of each of them'.[13] Each component part of his empire had a separate administration as well as its own laws, institutions and taxation, and no part was constitutionally subordinate to another. This federal structure was not embraced by any imperial administration. It is true that Gattinara had visions of an imperial system of government and he himself, as Burgundian grand chancellor, exercised an authority for all of Charles's dominions; but this development came to nothing. Equally, Charles's Council of State, which contained a mixed membership of Italians, Spaniards, and Burgundians, and had an advisory function in imperial affairs, was too ineffective to constitute a common policy-making body. Indeed, without a comprehensive financial policy and organisation, in which each state could give and receive its allotted quota of revenue and expenditure, there could be no imperial government. After Gattinara's death and the abolition of the office of grand chancellor, the only unity in Charles V's empire was provided by the person of the emperor himself and stemmed from his exclusive responsibility for policy and decisions.

Charles ruled his domains as head of a dynastic organisation. He was represented in each state by a regent or a viceroy, sometimes a member of the Habsburg family, as in Spain when he was absent, sometimes chosen from the Spanish nobility, as in Italy. Charles had viceroys in each country of the monarchy—Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia, Sicily, Naples, Sardinia, and Navarre, as well as in Peru and New Spain. In the Netherlands he was

[13] See the introduction by J. M. Batista i Roca in H. G. Koenigsberger, *The Government of Sicily under Philip II of Spain* (London, 1951), pp. 9–35.

represented by a governor general, first by his aunt, Margaret of Austria (1518–30), then by his sister, Mary of Hungary (1531–55). Germany was also delegated to a Habsburg, his brother Ferdinand.

Even in Spain itself there was no formal unity and no single institution by which he could impose his rule. Charles was king of Castile and king of Aragon rather than king of Spain, and he did not have the same power in Aragon as he did in Castile. What unity there was came from the *de facto* hegemony of Castile, which was the main source of his wealth and his troops, and from the activities of the Inquisition, whose jurisdiction applied to the whole of Spain regardless of legal frontiers. In Spain, as elsewhere, Charles V's method of government was personal monarchy exercised through centralised but not unified institutions, and the chosen instrument of Habsburg monarchy was the royal council which Charles had inherited from Ferdinand and Isabella. The Catholic Monarchs had reorganised conciliar government by restricting membership and by introducing bureaucracy and specialisation, which had produced specialised councils for different functions of government. These reforms were carried even further by Charles V, so that conciliar government, or administration by committees, became the characteristic feature of Habsburg monarchy. These councils were not assemblies of noble advisers, as they had been originally, but were bureaucratic committees, staffed largely by jurists, for the administration of royal policy.

There were two main types of council. First, there was the Council of State, an honorific and formal body, consisting of grandees and officials, which theoretically existed to advise the monarch on high matters of state policy. Apart from a brief tenure of office of the Duke of Alba and the Duke of Béjar, however, Charles did not trust grandees in political positions and his council consisted of ecclesiastics and administrators, about seven in number. Even so, it was not regularly consulted by Charles, who took decisions himself with the advice of his chief secretaries. Consequently the Council of State had no political influence and little administrative significance. On occasions, reinforced by military experts, it turned itself into a Council of War which Charles could consult for *ad hoc* purposes. Secondly, there was a much larger group of councils, which can be recognised as genuine administrative bodies and divided into two categories according to the territory they governed and the function they performed.

Each unit of the monarchy had its council. The Council of Castile had originated from the medieval Royal Council of the kings of Castile and had already been organised into a more bureaucratic body by Ferdinand and Isabella. Charles V completed the process of modernisation, by further excluding the aristocracy and staffing it with officials from the gentry and

jurist classes, and by reducing its membership from sixteen to about half that number. Its jurisdiction, like that of most Spanish councils, combined legal and administrative functions. As a court of law it heard appeals from the *audiencias*, and if the complaints of the cortes are to be believed it assumed too much judicial business and caused interminable delay. As an administrative committee it dealt with most of the internal affairs of Castile, including some ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and even at times gave advice on foreign policy.

For the administration of his eastern kingdoms Charles V inherited the Council of Aragon which under the reforms of Ferdinand had, like that of Castile, become a modern bureaucracy, from which the nobility was excluded. In addition to the administration of justice, the Council of Aragon also exercised general administrative functions. For this purpose it had a highly organised Chancellery and Treasury, staffed largely by jurists from the three eastern kingdoms.[14] When Charles V came to rule in Spain he preserved the structure of the Council of Aragon, and although it was royal policy to appoint a Castilian as treasurer, offices in Aragon were in general preserved for native incumbents. The same could not be said for royal administration in Italy, which was traditionally the sphere of Aragon. Ferdinand had already brought more Castilians than Catalans into the administration of Naples, and it was Castilians who profited from Charles V's acquisition of Milan. This process went even further when in 1555, in the interests of efficiency and specialisation, Italian affairs were taken from the jurisdiction of Aragon and given a council of their own, modelled on that of Castile. The affairs of Spain's colonial empire had already been assigned to a special council, the Council of the Indies, in 1524. All these territorial councils, however, were territorial only in name. They were in fact central institutions, located not in the countries they administered but at the side of the monarch.

Finally, there was also a group of councils which can be classified separately according to the specialised functions they performed. Of these, the most important were the Council of the Inquisition whose jurisdiction extended beyond the confines of Castile into the length and breadth of Spain, and whose functions amounted almost to those of a council for ecclesiastical affairs; and the Council of Finance, originally created in 1522 for the management of the finances of Castile but gradually supplying more and more of the resources for Charles's foreign wars.[15] The functional councils also included such subordinate ones as the Councils of Military Orders, of the *Cruzada*, and, for a time, of the *Hermandad*.

[14] See F. Sevillano Colom, 'La cancillería de Fernando el Católico', V. Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón (*Estudios* I), 217–53.

[15] On the Inquisition see above, pp. 20–29; on the Council of Finance see below, pp. 59–60.

In spite of its overhaul by the Catholic Monarchs and Charles V, conciliar government was not an efficient instrument for getting things done. The cumbersome procedure of the councils in which dispatches were read and commented upon with all the formality of a court of law, and above all their confusion of administrative and judicial functions, stored up large arrears of unfinished business and threatened to bring administration almost to a halt. In fact, Charles V did not normally communicate directly with his councils. He communicated with his secretaries. It was the secretaries who rescued his government from stagnation and enabled the conciliar system to work, and it was they who answered the need for a more efficient executive by providing the link between the crown and its councils. Consequently they must be regarded as key agents in the Habsburg system of government.

The office of secretary grew in status and in power in the reign of Charles V. Charles's secretariat, like the rest of his government, was organised on a national and not on an imperial basis, and within Spain his most important secretariat was based on Castile. Aragon, however, already possessed a highly organised bureaucratic Chancellery which the reforms of Ferdinand had brought within the framework of the Council of Aragon.[16] The administrative head was the Vice-Chancellor who countersigned all royal documents and was assisted by a Protonotary who was in charge of the three secretaries and their procedure. When Charles V came to rule in Spain he preserved the structure of the Chancellery in Aragon. Castile, on the other hand, had a different system. Here, as has been seen, the Council of Castile was the main government committee, and the signature of at least three of its members was required on all official documents. The royal secretaries, however, were the medium of communication between the sovereign and the council; they prepared the agenda for council meetings and were responsible through their assistants for the redaction of all royal documents, which had to be countersigned by one of the secretaries. In general the Castilian administration was much more loosely defined than that of Aragon, which made it liable to confusion or abuse of authority yet at the same time suitable for the emergence of a powerful co-ordinator. The council resented the exercise of independent authority by the secretaries and their issue of royal decrees without conciliar approval; it also resented their control of patronage and offices. But the need for quicker decisions and the anxiety of the king to exercise authority unrestrained by the councils, caused the office of secretary to grow in authority; within the secretariat two secretaries

[16] See Sevillano Colom, *op. cit.*, pp. 217–53.

emerged who might more appropriately be described as secretaries of state in order to distinguish them from the larger group of secretaries whose subordinate functions rendered them little more than clerks. The first of these was Francisco de los Cobos.

Born in poverty and obscurity in the small Andalusian town of Ubeda, and with no formal education, Cobos had served a fifteen-year apprenticeship in the secretariat before his appointment as royal secretary in 1516; and although he shared duties with a number of other secretaries, he soon became the principal member of the secretarial staff and, with the reforms of 1523, the controlling figure in the new Council of Finance, as well as member and secretary of most of the other councils; all of which gave him an important co-ordinating function.[17] The rise of Cobos reduced the other secretaries to minor rôles. It also produced rivalry with older officials, particularly with the grand chancellor, Gattinara. From the time that Charles returned to Spain in 1522, Gattinara and Cobos were competing for control of the machinery of government. As Cobos gained in influence with the king and placed his assistants in key administrative posts, Gattinara fought back and began to claim a position as head of the entire administration with control both of appointments and of the business of the councils. The emperor himself made it clear that this was not the function of the chancellor, whose office was a Burgundian one, but belonged to the administration of Castile.[18] From 1527 it became obvious that it was the secretary Cobos who enjoyed the chief position of responsibility and trust, while Gattinara's influence was beginning to wane. Indeed Gattinara was no longer even the leading adviser in foreign affairs. In 1529 Nicholas Perrenot, Lord of Granvelle, son of a modest Burgundian family who had risen through service in the Netherlands and diplomacy, was appointed member of the Council of State and began to take a leading part in the conduct of foreign policy. After the death of Gattinara in 1530 the office of grand chancellor was allowed to lapse and the emperor himself assumed personal responsibility for policy, using Cobos and Granvelle as his chief agents and advisers, with an agreed division of labour between the two, Granvelle specialising in foreign and imperial affairs, and Cobos in the government of Castile, where his office was now clearly based. When Charles left for the Netherlands in the autumn of 1539, Cobos remained behind, with the special responsibility of bringing order out of financial chaos, which was then the chief problem of government in Castile. And again, in 1543, when the emperor sailed from Barcelona not to return for fourteen years, he left Cobos, with Archbishop Tavera and the

[17] See below, pp. 60–61.

[18] See H. Keniston, *Francisco de los Cobos, Secretary of the Emperor Charles V* (Pittsburgh, Pa., 1960), pp. 99–103.

Duke of Alba, as the chief counsellors of his young son Philip, whom he had appointed Regent, and Cobos fulfilled this function until his death in 1547.

Cobos can be regarded as one of the creators of the Habsburg bureaucracy in Castile. He it was who recruited and trained for Charles V a staff of officials who gradually developed a corporate and professional spirit and looked upon Cobos himself as their *patrón*, or chief.[19] At first he selected his staff not from the large group of secretaries who had begun their service under the Catholic Monarchs but from his own protégés who had experience in other branches of the administration and on whom he knew he could count. Then, once he was established in control of most of the administration of Castile, he began to train men for office, such as his nephew, Juan Vázquez de Molina, Gonzalo Pérez, who succeeded the humanist Alfonso de Valdés, and Francisco de Eraso, all of whom he made assistant secretaries. Among these men there were no younger sons of nobility and, with the exception of Gonzalo Pérez, no men of learning or university training. They were, like Cobos himself, minor gentry from small towns, with a bureaucratic training and outlook as well as an eye to profit and preferment.

The organisation of business became more closely defined under Cobos. From the beginning of his service his office was responsible for the affairs of Castile, Portugal, and the Indies. After 1530 it also handled Italian affairs. He took care, however, not to interfere with the secretariat in Aragon. If he intervened to take the control of Italian affairs away from the Aragonese service that was because he believed that Castile should be responsible for Italian affairs and that the time had come to end the feeling that Naples and Sicily were Aragonese rather than Spanish kingdoms. He also refrained from interfering with the secretariat of Granvelle, who after 1530 was in charge of the rest of the empire and foreign relations. The secretary was the key figure in the distribution of incoming correspondence, either assigning it with a memorandum directly to the king or referring it to its appropriate council. Official business therefore came to the emperor thoroughly sifted by Cobos and the councils. Except for matters of international interest he rarely read correspondence himself, and his decision was usually taken down by the secretary who would prepare the document for signature and dispatch. In this way the creaking machinery of conciliar government was gradually made to work.

Yet the secretaries could not work miracles. Owing to the variety of Charles's interests and to his growing practice of depending on his own judgement in matters of policy, there was an accumulation of business which the bureaucratic machine, assiduous as it was, could not control. Moreover,

[19] Keniston, *op. cit.*, pp. 9–12, 332–55.

the bureaucracy itself became a vested interest and grew to parasitic proportions. Secretaries were not only important as a means of access to the king and therefore the recipients of favours from anxious suitors, they were also close to the source of patronage in the distribution of which they could amass large fortunes and estates, as Cobos himself did, as well as build up a following which would be expected to support its patron's policy. Cobos tended to employ only his own creatures, and gradually came almost to monopolise the control of offices. Moreover, he spent an inordinate amount of time observing the tactics and the policy of his rivals.

The emperor himself was aware of the manoeuvring for power and influence and of the search for wealth within his administration. In the 'Secret Instruction' which he sent to his son Philip in May 1543 when leaving him as Regent in Spain, Charles penned an acute analysis of the factionalism in his government.[20] He knew of the rivalries between the men whom he left with his son as advisers in matters of state. Of Cardinal Tavera and Secretary Cobos he wrote: 'Though they are heads of rival cliques, nevertheless I decided to appoint them both, so that you might not be left in the hands of either one of them.' He was suspicious of the Duke of Alba's ambition and warned Philip not to give him or any other grandee an important place in civil government, though in military affairs he could be relied upon. Philip was also warned not to use Cobos exclusively and to watch his accumulation of privileges which the emperor considered to be already too many.

Yet Charles V also knew a good administrator when he saw one, and he had no doubt of the loyalty and efficiency of Cobos. By the end of his life, largely due to his ability, experience, and the trust the emperor had in him, rather than through any formal definition of his office, Cobos had reached a position of power and influence and presided over a large and dutiful administration. He had taken the office of secretary with him in this ascent, and he was clearly a secretary of state rather than a clerk. It is significant, therefore, that this vital figure in Charles V's administration showed no interest in the great intellectual, political, and religious problems of the age of the Renaissance and Reformation. In his correspondence there was no discussion of the great issue of the church and the empire, and no concern for the imperial mission of his master to which Gattinara and some of Charles's other followers were so passionately devoted. He was a Spanish administrator and typified a more realistic and perhaps a more representative point of view. In fact, the emperor himself considered that the greatest service rendered by Cobos was in the field of finance.

[20] Printed in J. M. March, *Niñez y juventud de Felipe II* (2 vols., Madrid, 1941–2), ii. 23–39.

5. The 'Sinews of War'

Charles V's policy was based financially on Castile. As he himself gratuitously explained to the cortes of Castile in July 1523, he regarded 'these realms as the head of all the rest' and he intended to use their resources not only to sustain the others which God had given him but also to gain new ones and carry his frontiers even further for the advancement of the holy Catholic faith.[21] The cortes of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia provided him with occasional and modest grants, but there was a limit to their capacity, as has been seen. The Netherlands, with their trade, shipping, and industry, were a greater source of wealth, and the centralising process continued by Charles enabled him to tap that wealth more effectively than he could that of his Aragonese kingdoms. Consequently he ruthlessly exploited the financial resources of his subjects in the Low Countries until they could pay no more. In addition, he also had his possessions in Italy, and he could draw on the great financial markets like Genoa, Augsburg, and Antwerp, and on international bankers like the Fuggers and the Welsers. Yet even in terms of loans he borrowed four times as much in Castile as he did in Antwerp. By the end of his reign the quota of Castile was easily the biggest, and it was on Castile that the burden of imperial policy fell.[22] Gradually, and probably before 1550, the Low Countries could not support the financial weight which imperial policy assigned them. Less and less was coming from Naples, Milan, and Sicily; and essential as they were to the strategy of the emperor his Italian dominions were not fulfilling an imperial rôle in finance. The major effort was now coming from Spain, and within Spain from Castile, and behind Castile from America. The exhaustion of his European revenues made Charles increasingly dependent upon treasure shipments from the Spanish Indies. It was from the late 1520's that this treasure began to reach Spain in rapidly increasing quantities, yet even this did not lessen the burden on the tax-payers of Castile or decrease their quota of imperial finances.

In Spain the crown's financial position had already deteriorated before Charles ascended the throne, but it was certainly not improved by the rapacity of his Burgundian followers, the expenses of the imperial election, and the revolt of the *comuneros*. One of his first tasks on his return to Spain in 1522 was to reorganise the royal finances, and it was now that he created a new council, the Council of Finance, to supervise and control all income

[21] Merriman, *op. cit.*, iii. 122.

[22] See F. Braudel, 'Les emprunts de Charles-Quint sur la place d'Anvers', *Charles-Quint et son temps* (C.N.R.S., Paris, 1959), pp. 191–201.

and expenditure and to prepare a yearly budget. The new council, which began to function in February 1523, was similar to that with which he was already familiar in the Low Countries, and indeed Charles placed at its head Count Henry of Nassau who had been his chief of finances there. Soon, however, the body became exclusively Spanish in accordance with Charles's new practice and was dominated by its secretary, Francisco de los Cobos.

The optimism induced by the new service, however, was soon dispelled. Far from improving the emperor's position, Cobos in fact presided over the financial collapse of Spain during Charles's reign. Yet this was hardly the fault of the administration itself.[23] Cobos administered the treasury carefully and honestly and he managed to keep the nobles at bay in their search for sinecures and pensions. The council drew up its yearly budget estimates without fail, and while they were not always realistic and did not include debt repayment as part of expenditure, the source of the trouble lay in the fact that the demands of a new campaign or the negotiation of a heavy loan by the emperor himself without their knowledge made any attempt at a valid estimate impossible. No one knew better than Cobos the realities of the financial situation. The main cause of collapse was the emperor's foreign wars which were financed by Spain. An additional cause was Charles's personal extravagance in his royal household—which took a tenth of the national income—his ceaseless travels and his reckless purchase of jewels and objects of art. Short of peace and economy there was no solution, only a series of desperate expedients which took the crown to the verge of bankruptcy.

Ordinary revenue was derived chiefly from the *alcabala*, or sales tax, which in this period was converted into a quota payment made by each town or village; supplemented by revenues from the military orders and the grants of the cortes, it rose by about 50 per cent. during the emperor's reign and still fell far short of ordinary expenditure.[24] But expenditure was rarely, if ever, 'ordinary', and Charles's foreign campaigns devoured more and more extraordinary supply. This could be obtained in two ways. Already before Charles's time, the crown had begun the practice of raising extraordinary revenue by borrowing. This took the form of selling bonds (*juros*), the buyers of which received the crown's undertaking (*juro*—I swear) to pay a stated rate of interest. These *juros* could also be pensions without the crown having received any loan. All *juros*, whether bonds or pensions, were assigned upon specific sources of ordinary revenue, the treasury receiving only the

[23] In spite of the strictures of Brandi, *op. cit.*, p. 463.

[24] On Spanish finances see the original and pioneering work of R. Carande, *Carlos V y sus banqueros* (2 vols., Madrid, 1944–49), vol. ii. *La Hacienda Real de Castilla* (Madrid, 1949).

balance left over after these charges had been met. This practice was aggravated by Charles V as he granted more and more assignations on ordinary revenue to repay the ever-increasing number of loans he raised from bankers. In this way, fewer and fewer direct revenues remained in the hands of the king. Since 1524, for example, the revenues from the three military orders of Santiago, Calatrava and Alcántara, which hitherto had been paid directly to the crown, were paid to the Fuggers who had got them as mortgages for their loans. Banking transactions like this obviously had their advantages for the emperor in so far as the bankers were not only lending money but also transferring it abroad; such credit transfers and their payment wherever they were most needed, in Germany, Italy or the Low Countries, were quick and secure while the transport of ready cash from Spain was slow and uncertain. The trouble began when the practice grew beyond the actual resources of the crown.

In addition, however, there was also the income from the Indies—revenue from taxes, monopolies, and Indian tribute, together with the royal fifth, the crown's share of all precious metals mined. Rising sharply from 1529, the emperor's American revenue averaged roughly 252,000 ducats a year from 1534 to 1543.[25] But following the disturbances in Peru, receipts of treasure declined to about 118,000 ducats a year from 1544 to 1550. Even allowing for fluctuations, however, Charles's American income can be exaggerated. Public imports from America in the period 1503–60 totalled 12·6 million ducats: an average income of some 220,000 ducats annually. The crown's ordinary revenues in Spain at this time were estimated at a little over one million ducats annually, without making allowance for the prior charges on those revenues, which as the reign wore on came to devour the entire normal revenue and more. The income from America, therefore, was not a large proportion of the emperor's total revenue and it bore even less relation to his expenditure. To take one item from many: the disastrous campaign against Metz in 1552 cost him more than two million ducats. Alongside expenditure like this, what he derived from America each year even during the five years 1551–55 when, just before another slump, shipments were largest, was not impressive.[26] Even so, it could have great emergency value in the feeding, equipping, and payment of his restless armies and enable them to take the initiative against his enemies.

It is from the 1540's that the serious, as opposed to the normal, financial difficulties of the crown can be dated. After the Algerian campaign of 1542,

[25] E. J. Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain, 1501–1650* (Cambridge, Mass., 1934), pp. 32–45.

[26] In the period 1551–55 shipments averaged 1·2 million ducats a year, dropping to half of this for the next five years. See Hamilton, *op. cit.*, pp. 34–5.

those in France in 1543–44 and in the Empire in 1546–47, the position deteriorated so badly that for the rest of the reign ordinary revenue was always completely exhausted for several years in advance; moreover, expenditure was also several times higher than extraordinary revenue, for these major military operations coincided between 1542 and 1547 with a falling off in shipments of American treasure. The crisis can be illustrated with an example taken from the period. In April 1546 the emperor wrote from Ratisbonne to his son Philip who was then Regent in Spain that he had made up his mind to take the field against the Protestant princes of Germany. For this he would need large sums of money, and Cobos was to undertake the raising of loans from the agents of the German and Italian bankers in Spain. But Cobos found it almost impossible to raise loans. Most of the royal income had been sold or pledged up to the end of 1549 and even part of 1550; part of the income of the Indies was already committed, and there was not even enough money to pay the current interest on outstanding loans. The only suggestion Cobos could offer was that the emperor should make peace, and he advised his master to 'remember the importance of finding a remedy and relief for these kingdoms, because of the extreme need, for otherwise there could not fail to be serious trouble, because the need is so notorious that not only are the natives of the kingdom aware of it and are refusing to take part in any financial transactions, but even foreigners . . . are doing the same thing, because they know that there is no source from which payments can be made'.[27] But peace was the one remedy that Charles did not consider and in these circumstances Cobos and the Council of Finance, against their better judgement, had recourse to a last desperate remedy—the confiscation of all treasure from the Indies and the seizure of all specie in Spain and its shipment to the emperor. This financed Charles's victory against the German Protestants at Mühlberg, but it left a terrible legacy for the economy of Spain, particularly for the Indies trade. Sequestered treasure was in theory a loan which was repayable, but repayment was highly speculative and the whole transaction impeded legitimate trade and encouraged fraud; in March 1557 the emperor himself was complaining that his officials in Seville had allowed 90 per cent. of a treasure shipment to escape registration.

The death blow was delivered after the resumption of hostilities with France in 1551. In order to meet the French emergency in 1552 Charles borrowed over four million ducats; the Metz campaign alone cost 2·5 million; and he borrowed 2·5 million in each of the following years. Shipments of treasure from the Indies totalled over two million for 1552–53, but

[27] Keniston, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

Charles's foreign policy continued to be so expensive that in September 1554 the cash deficit for the current year was calculated at over 4·3 million ducats, even after all receipts for the six ensuing years had been pledged and the proceeds spent in advance. The terms on which Charles was still able to borrow worsened rapidly as the bankers had ever greater trouble in obtaining payment. Credit was now costing the crown 43 per cent. and more, when credit could be found.[28] Some creditors were tempted to remain in the game because if they refused they might lose all. For this reason Charles was unwilling to adopt the course of complete suspension of payments, and instead he had recourse to the expedient of a unilateral scaling down of payments due to his creditors. All that was left now was treasure from the Indies. Although much of this was owed in advance, by 1557 the crown was refusing even this to its creditors because it was needed immediately for the war against France. This enabled Philip's armies in the Low Countries to take the offensive and win the battle of St. Quentin in August 1557, but the effort exhausted his resources and forced him to bring the policy of his father to a halt. Paralysed by lack of money and unable to borrow more, he had to make a long overdue peace and settle with France in 1559.

Finance was the key to much of Charles V's policy and of the history of Spain during his reign. Yet the absence of political events in Spain and the silence of his subjects there after 1522 should not be interpreted as enthusiasm for the Habsburg cause. Spanish society was split between a large and privileged aristocracy which was the ally of the crown and the rest of the people who were passive spectators. Thwarted in their attempt to share the legislative power with the crown, the Castilian people lost all effective mediation in the control of taxation, and they could do nothing but watch the painful process of exploitation in the interests of a policy which was hardly their own. Divided and defenceless, Castile was in no position to oppose the creation of a superstructure which monopolised political control and dictated its destiny—the Habsburg monarchy, the aristocracy, the higher clergy, the army, and some of the intellectuals. These groups supported and could profit from the great enterprises undertaken by Charles V and his successors.

Yet there were many signs which indicated a divorce between the Castilian people and its ruling class. The emperor and some of his advisers might proclaim the ideal of a great Christian empire extending over two hemispheres with its base in Spain. Philosophers and men of letters like Alfonso de Valdés and Fray Antonio de Guevara might provide the imperial ideal with an intellectual justification. The struggle against Protestantism and the

[28] Carande, *op. cit.*, ii. 208.

Turk might appear as the supreme mission of Spain and her empire. But whenever popular sentiment could make itself heard, either in some collective impulse like that of the *comuneros*, or in the writings of chroniclers, or in the protests of the cortes, or in the advice of his Spanish administrators, then it was obvious that the urgent preoccupations of Spaniards were nearer home, more national in their objectives and more economical in their cost; the safety of Navarre and the outposts of North Africa, the struggle against the Turk, but in the Mediterranean and not on the Danube, the defence of the coasts, and peace with France and other Christian countries.[29] Francisco de los Cobos, the emperor's Spanish secretary, was constantly advising peace, 'that we might have a breathing space'. Even the Admiral of Castile wrote in 1531: 'Your Majesty's protracted absence from your Spanish kingdoms, though indispensable perhaps for the safety of threatened Christendom and the furtherance of your own political views, is a thing to which your Spanish subjects can hardly reconcile themselves'.[30] 'The safety of threatened Christendom', however, involved the emperor's presence in Germany, and here he received some sympathy from his Spanish subjects, for Lutheranism was hated in Spain.

6. Reformers and Humanists

Although it was quickened by the growing challenge of Protestantism, the Counter-Reformation had its roots in a movement of reform within the Catholic church which predated the revolt of Luther. And the example was set by Spain. Even before the efforts of Contarini, Giberti, Caraffa, and other early reformers grew to fruition and made their impact in Rome, the Spanish church had begun to take stock of itself and to put its house in order. And just as the Reformation itself was more than an attack on clerical abuses, so the Catholic Reform, in Spain as elsewhere, was accompanied by an intellectual and spiritual revival which went beyond a negative correction of faults. In Spain 'reform was demanded by everyone of virtue and learning; it began in the time of the Catholic Monarchs and continued throughout the sixteenth century; it was promoted to a great extent by the Inquisition, acting with the utmost severity; but it owed its principal glory to the magnanimous Isabella and to Fray Francisco Ximénez de Cisneros'.[31]

[29] See J. Carrera Pujal, *Historia de la economía española* (5 vols., Barcelona, 1943–47), i. 101–203.

[30] Merriman, *op. cit.*, iii. 122.

[31] M. Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles* (8 vols., Santander, 1946–48), iii. 32.

Confessor of Queen Isabella from 1492, provincial of the Franciscans in Castile, archbishop of Toledo and primate of Spain from 1495, Inquisitor general from 1507 and twice regent of the kingdom, Ximénez dominated the religious life of Spain during the twenty years before the outbreak of the Reformation.[32] Having renounced the life of a recluse with some reluctance, he quickly became a man of power and influence, ruthless with opponents and inflexible in his objectives. As a bishop he was a true pastor: setting first an example himself and in his household, he then sought to reform his diocese, attacking clerical concubinage and attempting to give some meaning to the term 'cure of souls' by admonishing his clergy to reside in their parishes, to explain the gospel of each Sunday to their parishioners, to teach Christian doctrine to the children. In spite of its continuation by later prelates, his programme for the secular clergy met with only limited success. Immoral and worldly priests continued to be found in Spain as in other parts of Christendom, and among the episcopacy dignity was often more highly regarded than austerity; Ximénez, whose practice of Franciscan poverty and penance as archbishop of Toledo was notorious, found himself reproached by Pope Alexander VI for not maintaining a due episcopal state. In general the secular clergy were not equal to their mission. This was one of the reasons for the progress of the religious orders, especially of the mendicants, who came to form a spiritual élite to whom laymen looked as the true representatives of the Christian ideal. There was need of reform here, too, but the prospects were more hopeful and resistance less obstinate. Supported by the crown and with the sanction of Rome, Ximénez began to improve the standards of religious houses; with some difficulty in the case of the Benedictines, but with more success among his own Franciscans where his methods took the form of installing Observants in place of Conventuals. The Dominicans had already undertaken a programme of reform based on stricter observance of the rules of the order and accompanied by an educational and theological revival which was reflected in the opening of the College of San Gregorio in Valladolid in 1496 and of the University of Avila in 1504.[33] Thanks to these efforts the standards of monasticism in Spain—and the number of its adherents—were superior to those found elsewhere in Europe, and it was no coincidence that in the reigns of Charles V and Philip II it was her missionaries who carried the Christian faith to new frontiers.

Ximénez was a man of vision as well as of zeal, and it was mainly under his inspiration that the new learning was placed at the service of the church.

[32] See M. Bataillon, *Erasme et l'Espagne* (Paris, 1937), pp. 1–75.

[33] On the Dominican reform see V. Beltrán de Heredia, *Historia de la reforma de la Provincia de España, 1450–1550* (Rome, 1939).

The fusion of his religious and his cultural interests, together with the opportunity provided by the immense revenue of the see of Toledo, led to the foundation of the University of Alcalá, which he began in 1498 and opened ten years later. This he intended to be an institution which would provide a complete ecclesiastical training—elementary, intermediate and advanced—and which would produce a clerical élite for promotion to benefices in the Spanish church. The statutes he gave the university were modelled on those of Paris, and many of the professors, such as Pedro de Lerma, the first chancellor of the university, had studied at the Sorbonne. But it was its faculty of theology which distinguished Alcalá from other universities in Spain; by providing chairs not only in Thomist but also in Scotist and Nominalist theology, Ximénez strengthened theological studies in Spain and gave them a new status.[34] The new university grew rapidly, and what had begun as a kind of seminary soon emulated Salamanca and became one of the most brilliant centres of learning in Europe, distinguished not only for its theological and canonical studies, but also for its promotion of the humanities, languages, and medicine. Ximénez also laid the foundations of a good university library, enriched with many Arabic scientific works saved from the burning of Arabic literature in Granada, which he himself had ordered, as well as from the sack of Oran. A printing press already functioned in Alcalá from 1494, but even here the influence of Ximénez was decisive, for it was he who brought the distinguished printer, Arnaldo Guillermo de Brocar, to the university town and gave him his most important commissions; these included the printing of spiritual texts for the Christian formation of clergy and laity, and above all of the Polyglot Bible.

The adoption of Christian humanism in the service of the Spanish reform movement was best seen in the promotion of Biblical studies, which were proceeding at the highest level in Spain before Luther and the Protestant reformers began to claim the Bible as their own. In order to give sacred studies a firm basis in the sources of revelation, Ximénez organised a critical edition of the Bible by means of a collation of texts. For this purpose he collected manuscripts, obtained permission for his collaborators to consult the codices in the Vatican Library, and assembled at Alcalá a group of Spanish and foreign scholars. Convert Jews like Alfonso de Zamora, Pablo Coronel and Alfonso de Alcalá were given the task of collating the Hebrew and Chaldean texts, and establishing a correct version, while the Cretan, Demetrio Ducas, and Spaniards like Hernán Núñez, Juan de Vergara, Diego López de Estúñiga and Antonio de Nebrija worked on the Greek text. The result was the Polyglot Bible, five volumes of which contained the

[34] Bataillon, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–18.

Old and New Testaments printed with the original languages and the Latin Vulgate in parallel columns, while the sixth volume provided a vocabulary and grammar. The whole work—a great feat of printing as well as of scholarship—was completed in 1517, although it was not actually published until 1522. And while its scholarship was not impeccable, it embodied far more research than the earlier and more publicised New Testament of Erasmus, who had an imperfect knowledge of Greek and based his work on insufficient manuscript material.[35]

The religious renaissance promoted by Ximénez, supplemented at a local level by men like Hernando de Talavera, archbishop of Granada, and continued later in the sixteenth century by reformers like St. Peter of Alcántara, St. Teresa of Avila, and St. John of the Cross, had profound and permanent results. It improved the monastic orders and the higher clergy in Spain to such an extent that in the crucial years of the Reformation the Spanish hierarchy and religious were in a position to play a powerful rôle in the councils of the church, and particularly in the Council of Trent. At the same time the theological revival led by the Dominicans of the Salamanca school such as Francisco de Vitoria (1480–1546), Melchor Cano (1509–60) and Domingo de Soto (1494–1560), and developed still further by the newly formed Society of Jesus, enabled Spanish theologians not only to expound Catholic doctrine in the great contemporary debate with Protestantism but also to make important contributions to the problems of empire, race relations, and international law, which were posed by Spain's unique position in the world. More immediately, the fact that the Spanish church had already undertaken to reform itself, deprived Protestantism of much of the reforming justification it claimed in northern and central Europe and helped to make Spain less accessible than other countries to Protestant propaganda. On the other hand, the Spanish reform was initiated under royal auspices and independently of Rome, whose own religious revival it anticipated by many years. This helped to increase the power of the crown in ecclesiastical affairs, nurtured Spanish suspicions of Rome, and had lengthy repercussions on relations between Spain and the papacy.[36] It was an interesting portent that before Luther protested against the preaching of Indulgences Cardinal Ximénez had forbidden them to be preached in Spain, not on doctrinal grounds, but because he thought there were more pressing needs than the rebuilding of St. Peter's in Rome. In the opinion of the Spanish ecclesiastical authorities, orthodoxy was secure enough in their hands, without the intervention of Rome. Yet the spiritual revival which they patronised at the beginning of the sixteenth century soon produced further offshoots which

[35] For a criticism of the Polyglot Bible see *ibid.*, pp. 43–46.
[36] See below, pp. 273–86.

they themselves began to suspect, and had effects which they had hardly intended. The rush into religious life recklessly increased the number of clergy, both regular and secular, many of whom lived in conditions of squalor on the fringes of religion and beyond ecclesiastical control. Furthermore the evangelical tendencies which animated the Franciscan and Dominican reform movements, especially the enormous growth of the Franciscan Observants, allowed the intake of many erratic recruits whose enthusiasm made them prone to the exaggerations of Illuminism, and, in the opinion of some, even to Protestantism. At the same time, Ximénez' chastisement of monastic disorder gave a vague sanction to attacks on friars in general, and this was one of the features of the success of Erasmus in Spain.

The instrument for dealing with heterodoxy, actual or potential, was the Inquisition.[37] Between about 1510 and 1520 its prestige was lower than at any time since its foundation; its ruthless campaign against the New Christians had crushed whatever threat to orthodoxy came from that quarter and reduced one of the main justifications for its own existence, while its arbitrary and absolutist methods were the target for a growing body of criticism. Those who opposed the Inquisition looked hopefully to the new monarch, Charles I, and for a time its fate was in the balance. Known to be opposed to the tribunal's methods of secret accusation and confiscation of property, the young king was pressed to reduce its powers and its functions. But as far as Charles was concerned the case against the Inquisition was spoilt when its Aragonese critics appealed to Rome in order to strengthen their hands. No less than his predecessors the emperor rejected papal intervention, especially as it threatened to remove crown control of the tribunal, and for this reason he dropped his projected reform of the Inquisition and silenced its opponents. From 1523 it was clear that the Spanish Inquisition had survived the crisis with royal support and with its power intact. Indeed, it now had new targets at which to aim: not only did it continue its relentless pursuit of Judaism, but, in the age of Luther, it directed its attention increasingly to two groups, Illuminists and Erasmists.

The sect of Illuminists, or *alumbrados*, was purely Spanish in origin, as can be seen perhaps in its peculiarly mystical character. Born independently of Protestantism, it existed as early as 1512 in Guadalajara and Salamanca, and had its beginnings among a group of Franciscans, some of whom were *conversos* of Jewish descent.[38] Illuminism was an aberration of mysticism. Its creed was the abdication of the will to God and the ability, or the claim, of the faithful to put themselves in personal communication with the divine

[37] See above, pp. 20–29; on the movement to restrict the power of the Inquisition see Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain*, i. 216–23.

[38] Bataillon, *op. cit.*, pp. 65–75, 179–242.

essence through ecstasy, on which occasions they believed themselves incapable of committing sin and often drew the inference that good works were useless. Some of its devotees found these doctrines a convenient pretext to indulge their sexual passions, and it was no coincidence that one of the unofficial leaders of the movement was the amorous Francisca Hernández 'of whom the men spoke with fanatical veneration, and the women with not so much respect'.[39] Others simply posed as saints and prophets, often with sufficient success to attract aristocratic patronage. In the early 1520's a flourishing group of Illuminists was discovered in Toledo, confined mainly to nuns and friars. The Inquisition had little difficulty in rooting it out, and by an edict of 23 September 1525 it condemned the entire doctrine of Illuminism. Henceforth the movement had little significance, but the Inquisition kept a close check on suspected devotees, with the result that anyone fired with religious enthusiasm was likely to be suspect: Ignatius Loyola, the future founder of the Society of Jesus, was jailed in 1527 and submitted to three examinations for suspected Illuminist leanings.

Although Spanish Illuminism predated the Lutheran revolt, many of its doctrines—such as the inefficacy of external works—were similar to those of the German reformer, and it served to pave the way for the entry of Protestantism into Spain.[40] In 1520 a Spanish translation of Luther's Commentary on Galatians was published in Flanders, followed by his *Freedom of the Christian Man*. At this stage little was known of Luther in Spain beyond a general rumour about a 'heretic who was rising in Germany'. But, warned by Rome, Inquisitor general Adrian issued on 7 September 1521 the first directive against Lutheran books in Spain. From then onwards the ecclesiastical authorities kept an anxious guard against the entry of Lutheran literature and missionaries, especially in the northern ports, but not with complete success. After a decade of the Lutheran revolt, new names, unknown to most Spaniards, had been added to the list of Protestant reformers, and their writings were making their way into Spain unmolested. The Inquisitors themselves were not always sure of their targets, and their inability to identify heretical doctrines with any accuracy partly accounts for the clumsiness of their methods and the wildness of their accusations. Isolated trials of alleged Lutherans in the 1520's and 1530's failed to reveal the existence of organised heresy in Spain, but demonstrated all too clearly how easy it was to use the Inquisition as a means of exacting personal vengeance and how ignorant many Spanish laymen were of the simplest

[39] A. Selke, 'Algunos datos nuevos sobre los primeros alumbrados', *Bulletin Hispanique*, lxiv. (1952), 125–52.

[40] On the early history of Protestantism in Spain see J. E. Longhurst, 'Luther in Spain; 1520–1540', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, ciii. (1959), 66–73.

Catholic doctrines. Here and there a few Spaniards and foreigners were claimed as victims. In 1523 the Inquisition tribunal of Mallorca executed one Gonsalvo the Painter, because he was a suspected Lutheran.[41] In 1524 a German named Blay Esteve was condemned as a Lutheran by the tribunal of Valencia, and in 1528 a certain Cornelis, a painter from Ghent, was found guilty of Lutheranism by the same tribunal and sentenced to life imprisonment. In the same year the tribunal of Toledo began the trial of Diego de Uceda on a charge of Lutheranism. This case was unique among the early trials, partly because it was the first case of Lutheranism tried at Toledo, and also because Uceda was not in fact a Lutheran but an enthusiastic devotee of the teachings of Erasmus.[42]

The entry of Erasmus opened a new phase in the Spanish renaissance. To a certain extent the ground had already been prepared. The esteem in which scholarship was held in Spain created an intellectual climate which was propitious to a favourable reception of his writings; in 1516, after the publication of his New Testament, he himself was invited to Spain—though unsuccessfully—by Cardinal Ximénez.[43] At the same time the attack on monastic abuses begun by Spanish reformers, though it had a more positive content than the ridicule heaped on religious orders by Erasmus, provided another point of contact. Advocating a general reform in the church, Erasmus satirised those whom he considered responsible for corruption, urging a return to the simplicity of the apostolic era. In the initial stages of Luther's break with Rome he refused to commit himself and advised moderation on both sides; his own view was that the church should reform itself before it began to condemn doctrines. In 1521, however, his own principles forced him to repudiate Luther over the question of free will, and from then onwards Spanish misgivings over his orthodoxy were dispelled. It mattered little to Spaniards that there were reservations about his doctrines in Rome, for the policies of Clement VII were suspect in Spain and inimical to Charles V. Indeed the views of Erasmus were welcome to those who wanted Christian concord and sought it under the auspices of the emperor rather than the pope.[44] In the court of Charles V there were influential supporters of Erasmus, including the emperor's Latin secretary, Alfonso de Valdés; from 1522 the court was in Spain and Spanish Erasmists were thus strategically placed to promote and protect the writings of their master. At the University of Alcalá the followers of Erasmus were even more numerous than those at court, while Juan de Vergara, who had worked on the Polyglot Bible, brought to the support of Erasmism the prestige of his learning and the influence of his position as secretary of Archbishop Fonseca. This was significant. The two most important ecclesiastical posts in Spain were held by enthusiasts of Erasmus: Alfonso de Fonseca, archbishop of Toledo, gave him a pension of 200 gold ducats while he was at work on his edition of St. Augustine, and Alfonso Manrique, archbishop of Seville and Inquisitor general, protected him when Edward Lee, Henry VIII's ambassador in Spain, was prompting Franciscans to attack him as a heretic.

[41] As Lea points out, *op. cit.*, iii. 413, it is difficult to give credence to such an accusation at that date.

[42] See J. E. Longhurst, *Luther and the Spanish Inquisition: the case of Diego de Uceda, 1528–1529* (Albuquerque, 1953).

[43] Bataillon, *op. cit.*, pp. 77–8.

[44] See below, pp. 75–76; on the relation between Erasmism, the Hebraic tradition, and Illuminism see E. Asensio, 'El erasmismo y las corrientes espirituales afines', *Revista de Filología Española*, xxxvi. (1952), 31–99.

The years 1522 to 1525 saw the Erasmist movement successfully established in Spain. Welcomed by humanists and with the approval of Fonseca and Manrique, many of his writings were published in Spanish translations.[45] Erasmus himself, who had begun by suspecting the climate of opinion beyond the Pyrenees, was soon conscious of his popularity there and expressed his gratitude for it: 'I owe more to Spain than to my own country, or any other'. Yet he also had his enemies. In Spain, as elsewhere, the controversy about his orthodoxy raged, and as the religious struggle in Germany grew more uncompromising, so the tension increased. As they were the main butt of his jibes, the monastic orders naturally hit back and assailed him as a heretic, especially after the appearance of a Spanish translation of *Enchiridion* —with a dedication to Manrique—in 1527. To further their attacks they enlisted the support of the Inquisition, few of whose judges were as broad-minded as their general, and some of whose officials were friars themselves. To settle the issue of Erasmus's orthodoxy, Manrique convoked at Valladolid in 1527 an assembly of thirty-two theologians to examine a list of Erasmian propositions, and after six weeks of discussion had failed to produce agreement forbade attacks on the scholar, a decision which a papal brief sought to modify by exonerating only his criticisms of Luther.[46] Charles V himself, inspired by Alfonso de Valdés, sent Erasmus a friendly letter indicating that he need have no fear of any unfavourable decision and expressing his personal conviction of his piety.[47]

During the next two years, while translations of Erasmus's writings were multiplying in Spain and enjoying a vogue among the educated public unequalled in any other European country, some of his followers were turning out humanistic literature of their own. In 1527 and 1528 Alfonso de Valdés wrote two popular dialogues in Spanish attacking clerical abuses, justifying the sack of Rome on grounds of papal perversity, and praising

[45] Bataillon, *op. cit.*, pp. 172–77, 253–57.

[46] *Ibid.* pp. 260–84.

[47] *Ibid.*, pp. 298–99.

Erasmian proposals.[48] The papal nuncio in Spain, Baldassare Castiglione, author of *The Courtier*, demanded that all copies of the anti-papal polemic be seized and destroyed, but this the Inquisitor general refused to do. At Augsburg in the summer of 1530, Valdés was in personal touch with Melanchthon, and although opposition to him in Spain was gathering force he continued to enjoy Charles V's favour to the last. In 1529 Alfonso's brother, Juan de Valdés, published his *Dialogue of Christian Doctrine*, in which he not only extolled the virtues of Erasmus but also described the latter's opponents as fools without knowledge of real Christian piety. This time the Inquisition moved in quickly, and began a series of examinations which resulted in the flight of Valdés to Italy and his subsequent conviction of heresy, along with the prohibition of his works in Spain.[49]

The conviction of Juan de Valdés was a sign of the times. Aware of the progress of Protestantism abroad, the Spanish church became more sensitive to criticism and less capable of tolerating dissent, however orthodox. Acting on a loose interpretation of heresy, the Inquisition renewed its campaign with increasing vigour and suddenly it broke through the defences of the humanists, at court and in the universities.[50] In June 1529 Charles V left Spain for Italy, taking with him many of the influential Erasmian courtiers. In December of the same year Inquisitor general Manrique, a staunch supporter still of Erasmus, was banished from court for displeasing the empress on a trivial matrimonial affair. By the time of Charles's return to Spain in 1533 the Inquisition had successfully associated in the public mind the teachings of Erasmus with the heresies of Luther, and Spain's leading Erasmists were either in jail as proto-Lutherans or else had fled the country. Juan de Vergara, a man of wide culture and learning, and—a fact which was always significant in the eyes of the Inquisition—a New Christian, was jailed in 1533, despite the efforts of his employer, Archbishop Fonseca. The technique employed against Vergara was typical and effective: he was smeared with accusations of Lutheranism, Illuminism, and Erasmism, all three being linked in such a way as to make them part of the same heresy.

Scholars at the University of Alcalá were also investigated. Its Chancellor, Pedro de Lerma, was an old adherent of Erasmus. In 1537, at the age of seventy he retired from the university, but in the same year he was jailed by the Inquisition for heresy. After a long trial, during which he was accused of introducing some of the teaching of Erasmus into his sermons, he was

[48] See below, pp. 75–76; Bataillon, *op. cit.*, 373–93, 395–414, 417–19.
[49] J. E. Longhurst, *Erasmus and the Spanish Inquisition: the case of Juan de Valdés* (Albuquerque, 1950).
[50] Bataillon, *op. cit.*, pp. 467–532.

forced to make public recantation in all the principal towns of Spain where he had preached of eleven propositions declared to be heretical, scandalous, and wicked; he was also required to declare that the false doctrines which he had preached in his sermons were diabolically inspired to sow evil in the church. Lerma left Spain at the first opportunity and returned to the Sorbonne, where he had once been Dean of the Faculty of Theology. There he remained, refusing to return to his native country where, he said, learned people could not live among such persecutors. In 1538 the death of Inquisitor general Manrique removed the last remaining Erasmist from a position of ecclesiastical authority in Spain. The fact that Erasmus had long since publicly avowed his opposition to Luther made little difference. From abroad Luis Vives wrote to the Dutch scholar: 'We live in difficult times, in which we can neither speak nor remain silent without danger. In Spain Vergara and his brother Tovar have been imprisoned, and other learned men as well. In England the bishops of Rochester and London and Thomas More. I pray you may have a tranquil old age.'[51] By 1538 overt expression of Erasmism was on its way to extinction in Spain.

The Erasmist movement, an early example perhaps of the tendency of Spanish intellectuals to inflate the products of foreign culture, had been orthodox in intent, and its adherents had never sought rupture with the Catholic church. Indeed there was no real danger that heresy would take root in Spain or that Protestantism would touch the mass of the people there. For the next twenty years Spain caused Rome no anxiety on account of the new doctrines coming from northern Europe. There were occasional incidents of isolated persons accused of Lutheranism being imprisoned by the Inquisition; all appear to have recanted and few of the penalties were drastic. In France, Germany, and the Low Countries a number of Spanish émigrés embraced the Lutheran faith, and Miguel Servet, a heretic to Catholics as a pantheist and one who denied the Trinity, was sufficiently objectionable to Calvin to be lured to Geneva and there burnt over a slow fire in 1553. In Spain itself up to 1558 there were only 105 cases of Lutheranism, of which 66 concerned foreigners.[52] The Spanish Inquisition, having silenced the Erasmists, was confident enough of religious security not to initiate any great heresy hunts, and comparative calm returned to the Peninsula. Outside, however, the king of Spain was fighting a losing battle.

[51] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 529.
[52] E. Schäfer, *Beitrage zur Geschichte des spanischen Protestantismus* (3 vols., Gütersloh, 1902), ii. 1–271, 342, 352.

CHAPTER III

THE EMPEROR CHARLES V

1. Universal Monarchy and its Opponents

The unity of Christendom under imperial rule and its defence against Moslems and heretics appeared to Charles V and many of his contemporaries as the supreme mission to which he had been called. He alone, it seemed, had the will and the means to impose peace on Europe and dominion over its enemies. *Un monarca, un imperio y una espada*—the ideal expressed in the noble verses of Hernando de Acuña remained an unfailing attraction to many people in a divided and threatened world. Among some of Charles's subjects, however, there were reservations; many Spaniards believed that his accession damaged the national interests of their country. The diversity of his inheritance, whatever power it brought to his international mission, would inevitably increase the pressures on Spain from foreign commitments, doom her prospects and diminish her resources. Spanish opinion, therefore, favoured a national policy, not an imperial one, and Charles's Spanish administrators regarded their master as primarily king of Spain and not the emperor of Europe.[1] Yet contemporaries did not use the word 'imperial' to describe their monarchs' policies: that is a concept added by later historians and imputes a consistency and deliberation to Charles's policy which it never contained.

The formula 'peace among Christians and war against the infidel' does, it is true, give unity and purpose to the emperor's policy and has, moreover, the support of his own statements. His declaration to the cortes of La Coruña was not an isolated one. In April 1521, exasperated by the attitude of Luther, he wrote a personal statement of principles for the Diet of Worms: 'In defence of Christendom I have decided to pledge my kingdoms, dominions and friends, my own body and blood, my soul and my life.' A few days earlier, in the same assembly, he had referred to the subject of imperial organisation in Germany and the obstacles presented by the particularism of the princes, and declared: 'It is not my desire and will that there be many lords, but one lord alone, as is the tradition of the Holy Empire'.[2] Eight

[1] See P. Rassow, *Die Kaiser-Idee Karls V* (Berlin, 1932), pp. 232–33. For a Spanish view of the international policy of Charles V see J. M. Doussinague, *La política exterior de España en el siglo XVI* (Madrid, 1949), pp. 123–290.

[2] Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V*, pp. 128–33.

years later, he delivered his famous discourse in Madrid (16 September 1529) in which he announced his departure for Italy in order to be crowned by the pope and to convince him of the need for a general council which would restore Catholic unity; in addition to its religious mission he even seemed to see the empire as a political entity, though one which only sought to preserve its own inheritance and not to extend itself by conquests. It is debatable, however, whether the ideas expressed in his Madrid speech—many of which were the stock-in-trade of most monarchs at the time—were Charles's own or simply derived from the influence of Gattinara.

In any case, the words of rulers are not necessarily the best guide to their policies. In practice Charles never considered the implications of an imperial policy or produced a system of priorities that might give meaning to his words. Indeed he had too many preoccupations, many of them conflicting, to be able to do justice to them all or integrate them into a coherent programme. With his particular interests, there could not be an imperial, or universal, or supranational policy, and without an imperial organisation there could hardly be an empire.[3] Charles V was essentially an inheritor, not a creator, and it is in the defence of the particular items of his inheritance that the motives of his policy must be sought.

Yet there were 'imperialists' at the court of Charles V. His grand chancellor Gattinara lectured him on his imperial destiny and tried to give him an imperial organisation. Gattinara, however, saw Italy—yet another particular interest and a source of conflict not of peace—as the centre of a new Christian empire and tried to persuade his master to stake all on his domination there. And the influence of Gattinara can be exaggerated; it had already begun to wane before his death in 1530. Moreover, even during Gattinara's administration, the highly realist policy of Charles V, particularly with regard to France, had little to do with a 'Universitas Christiana' which some historians have attributed to him immediately after the sack of Rome by imperial troops in 1527.[4] The expression of such a philosophy was not Charles's own but came from the pen of his Latin secretary, Alfonso de Valdés, one of the many Spanish humanists who wrote for the imperial cause.

In reply to the papal protest against the excesses of Charles's troops, Valdés wrote a bitter attack on the policy of Clement VII, in which he argued that the sack of Rome was God's punishment on the sins of the pope and his vice-ridden court, while the emperor wished to re-establish peace among Christian kingdoms in order to fight the Turk and restore concord in

[3] J. Vicens Vives, 'Imperio y administración en tiempo de Carlos V', *Charles-Quint et son temps*, pp. 9–21, provides a brilliant analysis of the limitations of Charles V's concept of empire.

[4] See Menéndez Pidal, *op. cit.*, for example.

the church. But these were not specifically Spanish ideals and they hardly reflected the calculating policy of the emperor himself. They were the propaganda of humanists and Erasmists, many of whom sought to restore Christian unity by means of a universal monarchy and looked for the salvation of Christendom to the emperor rather than the pope.[5] In 1527, with yet another reference to Charles's victory in Italy and the sack of Rome, the émigré Spanish humanist, Luis Vives, wrote to Erasmus: 'Christ has given an extraordinary opportunity to our age to realise this ideal, thanks to the great victory of the emperor and the captivity of the pope.' Some of the Spanish men of letters defended the imperial idea with their swords as well as their pens: Boscán took part in the relief expedition to Rhodes in 1522; Garcilaso de la Vega was wounded in Africa and died in the assault on the castle of Mai in Provence in 1536; Hernando de Acuña fought in France and Germany and took part in the battle of St. Quentin in 1557; and later in the century Diego Hurtado de Mendoza fought in the war against the moriscos of Granada as well as writing its history.[6]

Compared to these heroic figures, an administrator like Francisco de los Cobos, counting the cost, advocating a return to immediate Spanish interests, and urging Charles to stay in Spain and rule his people in peace and prosperity, might appear prosaic indeed. But the administration reflected realities, while the humanists purveyed dreams. This was apparent not only in the absence of an imperial organisation, which has already been noticed, but also in the distribution of the costs of empire and of its fruits. The major portion of both was assigned to Castile, but the empire that Castile valued was in America not in Europe. In spite of a brief interval of relaxation authorised by Charles V, the American empire was a monopoly of Castile. Between 1524 and 1538, it is true, Charles tried to extend permission to trade and reside in the Indies to all the subjects of his empire, and in these years foreigners, particularly Germans, took part in colonial trade and enterprises.[7] But the reasons for this were financial and technical ones and corresponded to Charles's search for the naval and capital resources needed in colonial expansion. They were certainly not influenced by the supranational ideas of the humanists or their faith in the universal mission and opportunities of the empire. In any case Spaniards had their own commercial interests to consider and were not prepared to share them with other subjects of the emperor who

[5] M. Bataillon, *Erasme et l'Espagne*, pp. 243–53.

[6] See J. Sánchez Montes, *Franceses, Protestantes, Turcos. Los españoles ante la política internacional de Carlos V* (Madrid, 1951), and its review by M. Bataillon in *Bulletin Hispanique*, liv. (1952), 208–11: also Sánchez Montes, 'Actitudes del español en la época de Carlos V', *Estudios Americanos*, iii. (Sevilla, 1951), 169–99.

[7] R. Konetzke, 'La legislación sobre inmigración de extranjeros en América durante el reinado de Carlos V', *Charles-Quint et son temps*, pp. 93–111.

Charles V by Titian (detail)

happened to be associated with Spain simply because of a dynastic inheritance. Even Spain's Christian mission in the New World was national rather than universal in character, at least as far as personnel were concerned, for Charles V followed the policy of his Spanish predecessors in excluding from the Indies not only foreign traders but also foreign missionaries. This provides further proof that in the empire of Charles V the particular forces were stronger than the collective ones and that Spain was emerging as the strongest of all the particular forces.

The idea of one ruler and one empire, however, was not only viewed with reserve by Spaniards but was inevitably rejected by other rulers and other nations who regarded it as an affront to their sovereignty. In practice, of course, Charles V was not faced with a simple choice between empire and national state, and it is understandable that he should strive to preserve the possessions which his unique dynastic position had brought him. No sixteenth-century ruler voluntarily gave up an inheritance. Indeed to whom could Charles have conceded his more distant possessions? Conditions in Europe at the beginning of the sixteenth century still favoured the existence of super-states, which could now be ruled by even greater administrative and military power than was available to medieval rulers, and it would be an anachronism to insist that at this date universal states were doomed to die. There were still areas of Europe not yet ready for national sovereignty, and in view of French policy in Italy from 1494 and the aspirations of Francis I to the Empire in 1519 the suspicion remains that had not Spain claimed them as its own then France would have done so. The French kings too had dynastic ambitions not very dissimilar to those of the Habsburgs. As it was, France was now on the defensive.

The constant hostility of France can be explained as a defence mechanism of a centralised and united state that found itself surrounded by the power of Charles V. Franco-Spanish rivalry, it is true, predated the accession of Charles V, and the idea of a diplomatic encirclement of France had already occurred to Ferdinand of Aragon who had forged the Spanish–German–English alliance, which the emperor continued. Rivalry was also in part inevitable, given the fact that two great powers were neighbours. But Charles V added a new dimension to the conflict with France. From the time of his accession to the throne of Spain, the Spanish frontier with France was no longer confined to the Pyrenees but extended to many other parts of Europe. Indeed, the power of Charles V pressed France on almost all her frontiers: in the north from the Low Countries and Artois, in the east from Franche-Comté, in the south-west from Spain and the Mediterranean. In these conditions France was faced with the alternative of a struggle for independent life as a major power or acceptance of satellite status with constant

risk of intervention. For France this was a national issue, and the question of Italy, important as it was in aggravating the rivalry, was of secondary interest. The main object of French policy was to resist the enormous power of the Habsburgs by striking simultaneously with its other enemies, the Germans and the Turks, and as strongly as possible, at its most sensitive point, whether that happened to be Germany, Italy or the Mediterranean. The ubiquity of Habsburg power meant that allies against it were not difficult to find. One of these was the Turk.

In the Ottoman empire Charles V faced not only a formidable land power but also his greatest maritime rival. Once again, this was a conflict which he inherited, but whereas under his predecessors Spain had faced Islam virtually on her own, now two similar but incompatible imperial systems confronted each other across the Mediterranean. At the same time, because of the wider interests of Charles V, his responsibilities lay in the defence not only of Spain but also of other parts of Europe. For the striking power of the Turk was directed against three areas—eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, and Spain itself. The Turkish move northward towards the centre of the Balkan peninsula had already begun before the capture of Constantinople in 1453, but after that date the frontier between the Ottoman empire and Christendom was pushed deeper into Europe, and with the capture of Belgrade in 1521, the year which saw the beginning of the great conflict between Charles V and Francis I, the Turk was poised to enter Hungary. The capture of Constantinople, however, had added another factor to Turkish expansion: with possession of the deserted quays and arsenals and easy access to the timber supplies of the vast forests of the Black Sea area, the Ottoman empire became a major naval power and began to menace the lines of western commerce with the eastern Mediterranean. Consequently it was no longer the land frontier along the Danube that had to be defended but also a new sea front in the Levant and the Adriatic, where even Italy was threatened.

To reach across the Mediterranean and strike at Spain itself was beyond the resources even of the Ottoman empire, and there was no real danger of the Spanish coasts being attacked by squadrons from Constantinople.[8] The Turkish fleet could not reach Spain directly but needed a base either on the Barbary coast of North Africa or on the Mediterranean coast of France. The danger for Spain lay in the fact that the Turk had allies in both these places and might find yet another ally within Spain itself. The naval power of Islam was now doubled by the combined strength of the small but numerous fleets of the Mohammedan pirates of North Africa, who began to work in close alliance with the Turk and had the support of the Sultan himself. The

[8] On the problems of Spain in the Mediterranean see the great masterpiece by F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris, 1949).

strength and hostility of the Moors of North Africa had been increased in the last years of the fifteenth century following the fall of Granada. Those Moors who quitted Spain took refuge on the nearby coast of North Africa and many of them continued the struggle against their hereditary enemy, not only by the capture of vessels at sea but also by raiding expeditions on the Spanish coast. In the latter event there was the additional danger of their finding allies among the *moriscos*, or those Moors who had chosen to remain in Spain and whom the Spanish authorities regarded as a subversive element. Then, in 1516 pirates of Turkish origin established their domination over Algiers, and a great number of their Moorish friends found refuge there. The new state, enriched by plunder, began to construct fleets and to make itself a Mediterranean power, a menace to Christians who were enslaved for ransom money and a source of basic insecurity in what had once been the sheltered waters of the western Mediterranean. In this area Spanish interests were directly involved, as were the interests of Europe as a whole; and it was on Spain that fell most of the responsibility for defence and counter-attack, in a war that was damaging not only financially but also in prestige. As this coincided with the war against France, the two enemies of Spain co-operated and produced the Franco-Turkish alliance, the scandal of Christendom but an irresistible temptation for French diplomacy. Another temptation was Germany.

In the same year as Charles V arrived in Spain, 1517, Luther published his Thesis against Indulgences. The crisis of religion, together with the political obstacles in the way of imperial government in Germany, increased the pressures on Charles and on Spain. In spite of their imperial title the Habsburgs had little power in Germany outside their own domains and they found they could make little headway against the particularism of the German princes. Moreover, owing to his distance from events Charles was forced to abandon personal action in Germany, though he retained control of policy: in 1521 he made his brother Ferdinand his permanent representative in Germany; in February 1522 he ceded his Habsburg domains to Ferdinand who now became archduke of Austria and was thus compensated for the loss of his prospects in Spain itself. The Protestant revolt removed Germany yet further from the emperor's control and opened yet another gap in his defences. Here was a point of weakness that many of his enemies could exploit, and France in particular began to look for an ally in Protestantism as well as in Islam. Charles himself found it extremely difficult to separate the political and the religious issues in Germany. Quite apart from his own orthodoxy, Charles valued religious peace in his empire as a condition of political union. In its political aspect Lutheranism might mean further independence of the princes of the Empire and reinforce the development of

autonomous units in which the ruler would be head of both church and state. In the event, the princes gained little from the Reformation, for their penury forced them to sell church lands, and the estates used their ever-increasing demands for money to gain new privileges and some say in church affairs.[9] But whoever gained from it, Charles was forced to oppose Lutheranism, for it was a denial of an imperial Germany under a central government and another blow to his hopes of giving some substance to the idea of the Holy Roman Empire.

Charles's own religious views, however, though not deeply developed, were never anything but orthodox, and it was in religion that he came nearest to reflecting public opinion in his Spanish kingdoms, which was intensely anti-Lutheran. He himself seems to have appreciated this, for he usually met complaints about his long absences from Spain with the argument that he was putting down Lutherans. Even here, however, Charles had his own interests to think of as well as the views of his Spanish subjects. Owing to his political objectives in Germany, which had little to do with Spanish interests, he had to preserve communications with the German princes. Consequently his policy towards Lutheranism wavered between the desire to suppress it and the desire to prevent it from entrenching itself more deeply: to accomplish the second objective he was ready to negotiate. This, however, brought him into conflict with yet another power—the papacy.

The emperor's international objectives never received the papal support to which he considered they were entitled. Like other rulers in Europe, the pope was conscious of the ubiquitous presence of Habsburg power. In Italy it held a particular menace for him: if the same king possessed Milan and Naples then the independence of the papacy, caught between these two states, could be threatened. Papal reserve towards the emperor, however, was not simply the distrust of one statesman for another. It was also derived from religious reasons. No one in Spain, and certainly not the crown, challenged the spiritual authority of the pope; but every effort was made to limit papal intervention in temporal affairs and even in ecclesiastical matters like church appointments and jurisdiction. Charles V inherited this tradition and strengthened it. In 1523, for example, he secured from his former tutor and regent, Adrian VI, a perpetual grant of the right to present to bishoprics. But later popes were less compliant, and disputes over ecclesiastical jurisdiction were a constant source of tension between Spain and the papacy. Moreover, the papacy suspected some of Charles's religious objectives and believed that he either misunderstood Luther's doctrines or underesti-

[9] F. L. Carsten, *Princes and Parliaments in Germany from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 431, 437.

mated their distance from Catholic orthodoxy. Suspecting the emperor's objectives, the papacy also suspected his means. In particular it believed that his criticism of the moral decadence of the curia and his plea for a general council of the church reflected his political as well as his religious interests. Charles V inherited the medieval idea that it was the duty of the emperor to call a council when the critical state of Christendom demanded it. But his own interests demanded it too. In the first place, a likely difference of opinion between the council and the pope made it possible for the emperor to use the threat of a council to put pressure on the papacy, and Charles valued such a weapon in his anti-French diplomacy. Secondly, Charles wanted a council in which Protestant opinion might be freely voiced in order to reach a compromise by means of some relaxation in church discipline, such as permission for clerical marriage and services in the vernacular. In this case he was more concerned with politics in Germany than with a revival in the church. Spain itself had never been really affected by conciliar theory, though even in Spanish opinion[10] at the beginning of the sixteenth century the question of church reform included the idea of a general council. The Spanish church, however, was more concerned with the practical problem of making sure that reform councils would be convened at frequent intervals and their decrees carried into effect than with the question of papal authority as such, and the Spanish church remained implacably hostile to Lutheranism wherever it showed itself. Yet Charles could not procure the papal alliance he wanted even on Spain's account. His Spanish counsellors believed no less than Charles himself that Paul III should abandon his position of neutrality in the conflict between their master and Francis I, and they based their position on the ground that the pope should support an orthodox nation like Spain rather than a dubious one like France. When the papacy did abandon its neutrality, however, it was not always in favour of Spain.

Indeed, in the Habsburg–Valois rivalry the king of France could count on numerous allies who would offer him material or moral support—the Ottoman Turk, the German Protestants, Denmark, the pope and many Italian princes, all of whom were more or less hostile to Charles V. The European possessions of the emperor, on the other hand, scattered and unintegrated as they were, were exposed to numerous enemies and could count on few friends. Only the king of England and the Shah of Persia favoured the Habsburg cause from time to time, the first against France, the second against the Turk. In a hostile world, the English alliance could

[10] See H. Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, vol. i. (Eng. trans., London, 1957). Also R. Burgos, *España en Trento* (Madrid, 1941); C. Gutiérrez, *Españoles en Trento* (Valladolid, 1951); F. Cereceda, *Diego Laínez en la Europa religiosa de su tiempo, 1512–1565* (2 vols., Madrid, 1945–46).

be very useful to Charles V. The future maritime-colonial struggle between Spain and England had not yet developed, though its origins were already being prepared; in any case, England was not yet a first-rate power. But Charles appreciated that England had great diplomatic value and even greater strategic value. One of the first acts of foreign policy which the emperor undertook on his own initiative was to confirm the English alliance by the Treaty of Canterbury with Henry VIII in 1520 and by the project of a marriage between Charles himself and Mary Tudor in 1521. The marriage never took place but the alliance lasted almost without interruption for the whole of the reign and culminated in another marriage, that of Charles's son, Philip, with the same Mary in 1554. By that time the emperor regarded the English alliance as vital for the defence of the Low Countries and of their communications with Spain.

2. The Armed Forces of Empire

To preserve diplomatic communications and defend his many interests Charles V had a network of resident embassies which he inherited from Ferdinand of Aragon and which were filled by one of the most accomplished diplomatic staffs in Europe.[11] In the last resort, however, the sanction behind his policy was his armed forces and the money with which these could be provided.[12]

One of the vital needs of Charles V's widespread empire was the maintenance of political and commercial communications by sea power. He also had to defend it against a powerful maritime rival in the Mediterranean. Yet the weakness of his empire was exposed precisely at sea. This was partly a question of manpower. Compared with the human resources of the Turk and the pirates of Algiers, Charles was woefully short of trained seamen capable of manning the galleys of his Mediterranean fleet. In default of sufficient oarsmen, the Spanish navy had to rely heavily on convicts and prisoners-of-war and was still unable to meet its commitments. With the discovery of America and the growing maritime demands that this involved, more and more Spanish seamen, especially from Biscay and Andalucía, were engaged on the Atlantic crossing. Catalonia, on the other hand, could not fulfil a similar function in the Mediterranean. The decline of Catalonia, already apparent in the fifteenth century, was virtually complete by the time Charles V began to rule. Its maritime activity was now reduced to minor trade with Marseilles and the Balearics, and Catalan ships rarely ventured to Sardinia or Sicily or the outposts of North Africa. Remote from

[11] G. Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*, pp. 138–52.
[12] On the money available for warfare see above, pp. 59–64.

the fisheries of northern Europe and bereft of an active trade in the Mediterranean, Catalonia was in no position to provide a 'nursery' of trained seamen for the Spanish fleets. Another consequence of the loss of trade was the decline of the Catalan merchant fleet and this in turn produced a decline in shipbuilding and with it the loss of skilled labour and management. Once the tradition of shipbuilding had gone, it was difficult to replace it, and Charles V never attempted to. So dead was the Catalan coast that when in 1562 Philip II decided to undertake a vast programme of shipbuilding and naval armament he had to give the contracts to Italian shipyards; and in order to try and revive the arsenal of Barcelona he had to import Genoese technicians.[13]

The final obstacle to the maritime power of Spain was the shortage of vital naval stores. Compared with the Turk, whose timber supplies from the Black Sea area were almost inexhaustible, Spain was at a grave disadvantage. Like her neighbours, she suffered from the general deforestation in the western and central Mediterranean and lacked sufficient timber for her masts and oak for her hulls. More and more throughout the sixteenth century Spain was forced to procure her timber supplies from the Baltic, but with greater distances to cover and more obstacles to encounter than her enemies in northern Europe.[14] To the basic conditions of Spain's maritime position the government of Charles V paid little attention. On the other hand, the emperor occasionally disposed of large sums of money. Like most rulers in the sixteenth century he raised his naval forces as he needed them by contracts with private shipowners, rather than by developing a permanent royal navy. In Spain the state's biggest contractor was Alvaro de Bazán, father of the Marquis of Santa Cruz, who conceived the idea of the Invincible Armada. And without the vessels he could hire from his Genoese ally, Andrea Doria, the emperor's position in the Mediterranean would have been desperate indeed.

While Spain could not provide Charles V with a powerful navy, she could supply him with the best army in Europe. The long struggle with the Moors in Spain itself had established a military tradition which survived the fall of Granada in 1492. Soldiering had become a fashionable and a profitable occupation not only for the gentry but for the whole population. Recruitment, therefore, was not an insuperable problem, and after the experience of the war of Granada a modified form of national conscription was introduced in 1496 which was the first step in replacing feudal levies by a national army, recruited, paid and controlled by the central government.

The Spanish army excelled above all in its infantry, whose superiority was observed by Machiavelli and survived to the period of the Thirty Years War. Indeed her infantry forces for foreign wars were the only ones seriously

[13] Braudel, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

[14] Braudel, *op cit.*, pp. 108–10.

organised by Spain in the sixteenth century. In the peninsula itself militia or police forces were the only ones used, and their main task was to keep public order and security. The cavalry was regarded merely as a subordinate arm, accompanying each infantry regiment. These regiments had been originally organised by a brilliant young officer of Ferdinand and Isabella, their 'Great Captain', Gonzalo de Córdoba.[15] In the Italian wars at the beginning of the sixteenth century he had improved the efficiency of the Spanish units by introducing radical changes in their organisation, which took the form of an increase in armament by the addition of pikes and arquebusiers and an improvement in tactics by attention to mobility. Combined with the introduction of the *tercio* in 1534, which became the standard regimental unit, the reforms of Gonzalo de Córdoba effected a revolution in infantry fighting which made the reputation of the Spanish army for the next hundred years. The essence of this method consisted in the integration of the various arms. Of the 3,000 men in a Spanish *tercio*, there were 1,500 pikemen, 1,000 swordsmen and 500 arquebusiers.[16] In battle formation the pikemen would form protective squares, with the swordsmen in the centre so that these might surprise the enemy when it came to hand-to-hand fighting. These squares were very difficult to break, especially as they were given supporting fire from the arquebusiers and artillery separately positioned.

The Spanish *tercios*, probably so called because of the three elements of which they were composed, first made their appearance in Italy and they were named after the regions where they were stationed, Milan, Naples, Sicily or Sardinia. Later, when Philip II decided to send an army into the Low Countries, he established the *tercio* of Flanders. They were recruited from the various nationalities of which the empire was composed, but Charles V and his successor were most partial to the Spanish soldier, the one in whom they had most confidence, and as far as possible the Spanish regiments were kept homogeneous. In Spain, the ten or twelve companies of which a *tercio* was composed were recruited by means of volunteers; the royal treasury made a contract with a captain whose reputation would guarantee his ability to raise a sufficient number of troops. Government inspectors then made sure that the company was complete to the number specified in the contract before paying the captain.

Among these volunteers were often the younger sons of noble families who preferred a military career to a court or ecclesiastical one and who wanted to serve their apprenticeship under officers with the best reputations.

[15] Piero Pieri, 'Gonsalvo di Cordova e lo origine del moderno esercito spagnolo', *Fernando el Católico e Italia*. V. Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón (*Estudios*, III), 207–25.

[16] Later in the century the size of the *tercio* was reduced to under 2,000 men.

There were also recruits who were escaping from justice: later in the century, when Philip II was desperate for troops for the war in Flanders, he recruited a *tercio* from Catalan bandits whom he pardoned on condition that they enrolled in the Spanish army. And always there were those who volunteered because they could not find a living in Spain except by manual work, and for some Castilians a military career was infinitely better than working. Indeed it offered prospects of earning sufficient money with which to buy a landed estate at a time when there were few other ways of making a fortune in Spain; the careers of some of Charles V's greatest commanders, such as Antonio de Leyva and Fernando de Alarcón, both of whom acquired wealth as well as glory, provided striking examples of the profits available in the military profession and a compelling reason for the support which universal monarchy could claim among some of the emperor's subjects. But if the Spanish army reflected social conditions in Spain, it also frequently reflected the state of the royal treasury. Mutiny, often highly organised, was endemic in the Spanish army of the sixteenth century and could usually be traced to a bankrupt government's inability to pay its troops. Prolific as she was in soldiers, Spain could still not supply sufficient recruits for the emperor's many campaigns and he had to rely also on mercenaries recruited from various parts of his dominions, such as Germans and Walloons. Less reliable than Spanish troops, the discipline of these regiments depended entirely on the payment of their wages, and this in turn depended on the emperor's ability to raise money. Nevertheless, Charles V was not the only monarch with financial difficulties, and although his resources were never equal to his commitments, he usually disposed of greater money power than his most powerful European rival, Francis I of France.

3. The Struggle with France

The relative strength of Charles V and Francis I, and its relation to their financial power, was first tested in the contest for the imperial crown, which was decided in Charles's favour. From then onwards the French king was alert to the possibilities of strengthening his own position by attacking the weaknesses of his rival. Anxious to exploit the revolt of the *comuneros* in Spain, Francis I declared war on the emperor (22 April 1521) and so began a new period of conflict. A French army invaded Navarre but was too late to take advantage of the disorders in Castile where the rebels in fact joined with the royal army to repel the French and ended the attempt of Navarre to restore its independence under French protection. This kind of hostility, however, was largely accidental: the main theatre of war, and the permanent struggle, was in Italy.

Whereas the policy of Chièvres, who died in May 1521, had aimed at the protection of the Low Countries by understandings with England and France, Gattinara wished to make Italy the centre of the emperor's interests, with the argument that, once the French had been turned out of Italy, he could make terms with the pope and control all Europe. The influence of Gattinara gave a new direction to Charles's policy, but this was partly because his advice also coincided with the strategic interests of the Habsburg empire. Milan, the former fief of the German empire, held a key position in the Spanish-Austrian axis: as it was easily reached from Genoa it was a vital link in the line of communications between Spain and Franche-Comté and between Spain and the Tyrol.[17] Once Charles was convinced of the importance of Milan, he acted quickly and sent an expedition into Lombardy which took Milan for the emperor in November 1521. In January 1522 Charles's former tutor, now Regent of Spain, Adrian of Utrecht, was elected pope as Adrian VI. Consequently, Gattinara's two conditions for the success of Charles's empire—domination in Italy and alliance with the papacy—were on the point of being fulfilled, and by August 1523 the emperor and his vassal states, together with the pope, Venice, Florence, and England, were allied against Francis I. But Adrian VI, the keystone of the alliance, died in September and was succeeded by Clement VII, whose election initiated a series of Italian popes all anxious to hold the balance between the two great powers, and thus removed one of the basic conditions for the success of Gattinara's policy.

Meanwhile, however, Charles had been looking after his northern flank. At Windsor on 16 June 1522 he had concluded an alliance with Henry VIII which had been followed by a secret treaty.[18] By this Charles was betrothed to Henry's daughter, Mary, then aged six, and the allies agreed on a plan for the complete conquest of France by armies led by the monarchs in person; out of the subsequent division of spoils Henry was to receive the crown and the western provinces, while the emperor was to recover all the former Burgundian territories and add to them Languedoc, Provence, and the valley of the Rhone, thus providing another link between Spain and Italy and the northern lands of the Habsburgs. In spite of its fantasy, the Treaty of Windsor is a telling commentary on the dynastic and chivalric nature of Charles's policy at this stage and provides yet a further justification of French resistance to Habsburg power. Both monarchs were serious, and within his aggressive intent Charles was pursuing an objective that was

[17] On imperial Milan see F. Chabod, *Lo Stato di Milano nell' Impero di Carlo V* (Milan, 1934).

[18] See *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish, Further Supplement to vols. 1 and 2 (1513–1542)* ed. G. Mattingly (London, 1947), pp. xvii–xviii.

always dear to his heart—the recovery of his Burgundian patrimony. The plan itself, however, was unrealistic and doomed to failure: it underestimated the military and financial weakness of the allies and the great defensive strength of France.

With England a diplomatic rather than a military ally, and with a pope who began to loosen the coalition formed under his predecessor, the prospect of uniting Italy against the French looked as distant as the conquest of France itself. Francis I reconquered Milan in October 1524, and in December Clement VII concluded an alliance with France and Venice. In these circumstances, Charles decided that the English match was not worth concluding: a Portuguese bride would bring him a bigger cash dowry, and armed with this he could settle Italy before returning to the grand plan against France. At this point, on 10 March 1525, he received the news that his generals, Pescara, Leyva, and Lannoy had routed the French at Pavia and taken Francis I prisoner. Charles could now dictate the terms of peace without reference to England. He found it much more difficult, however, to follow up his victory over France. Indeed, the captivity of the French king in Madrid, sensational as it was to contemporaries, could not in itself solve the problem of power posed by Charles's relations with France or reduce the dilemma whether to give priority to Italy or to Burgundy. His Spanish counsellors were urging him to abandon the Italian mirage, and he himself, against Gattinara's advice, refused Francis I's offer to pay a huge ransom, leave Italy and renounce all claims to Flanders and Artois, for he wanted above all the Duchy of Burgundy. In any case, what were such offers worth? By the Treaty of Madrid (15 January 1526) Francis I undertook, in return for his freedom, not only to renounce his claims to Italy and Flanders, but also to hand over Burgundy to the emperor. But Charles himself realised that to implement the treaty would require armed force and considerable expense.

Indeed, far from fulfilling the Treaty of Madrid, Francis I organised the League of Cognac against the emperor. Whether Charles V aspired to a universal empire or not, the fact remained that even without counting any of the territories in dispute—Milan and Burgundy—his dominions were already too universal and injured too many interests not to provoke widespread resentment: and as for his pursuit of Christian concord, there was little sign of that in his demands in the Treaty of Madrid. It was not difficult, therefore, for Francis I to find allies in Italy, beginning with the pope himself and including Venice, Florence, and other cities, while even Henry VIII momentarily abandoned the Spanish alliance. Such a widening of the enemy front in Italy was dangerous to Charles V. In order to defend himself he decided to strike at the weakest link in the chain, the pope. But shortage of

money was beginning to tell; unpaid armies were difficult to control, and the assault on Rome in May 1527 by Spanish and German troops was followed by looting and sacrilege that lasted for a whole week.

These campaigns, however, like the victory of Pavia itself, could not win Charles the balance of power in Italy or fulfil the programme that Gattinara was still urging on him. From 1526 his Spanish administrators had been advising him to avoid all plans of further involvement in Italy, largely on financial grounds. In fact the stalemate of 1527 was caused by the fact that neither Charles V nor Francis I had money to do more. Gradually, however, an improvement in Charles's material prospects began to give him the advantage of power against his rival. Treasure from the Indies was now arriving in appreciable quantities. In July 1528 Andrea Doria defected from France and transferred his service and his fleet to the emperor who now had a major naval base at his disposal and greater security of communications. The French army which had invaded Milan and Naples was defeated, and in July 1529 pope and emperor were reconciled in the Treaty of Barcelona and Clement VII at last agreed to receive Charles in Italy. Outmanoeuvred and outfought, Francis I was now forced to come to terms. By the Peace of Cambrai (3 August 1529) he recognised Charles's sovereignty over Artois and Flanders and surrendered all claims to Milan, Genoa and Naples; for his part Charles renounced his immediate claim to Burgundy while still protesting all his rights there. This was shortly followed by Charles's recognition of Francesco Sforza, duke of Milan, as his imperial feudatory.

Now that he was reconciled with the pope, Charles decided to undertake the journey to Italy to receive the imperial crown from his hands. At this moment, just before his departure from Spain, he delivered his 'imperial' speech in Madrid, in which he publicised his ideal of a Christian empire.[19] Superficially, Gattinara's policy had triumphed: Charles followed up his political victory in Italy by reaching an understanding with the pope, symbolised by his coronation in Bologna by Clement VII. But Gattinara's position in the emperor's administration was beginning to decline, and his policy was destined to bring Charles more problems than it solved. The dominant position in Italy, which Gattinara had promised would make him master of Europe, in fact prevented him from pacifying Europe and using his Christian empire against the Turk, with whom France had already established diplomatic relations. Feeling the pressure of Habsburg power on all its land frontiers, France would strike out whenever the opportunity occurred. The death of the Sforza duke of Milan in 1535 reopened the question of Italy by producing demands of the French government for the succession of one of its candidates, and when in March 1536 a French army

[19] See above, pp. 74–75.

invaded Savoy and Piedmont and occupied Turin the threat to Milan became acute. Consequently, Charles's successful African campaign of 1535, which culminated in the capture of Tunis, could not be followed up because he was then forced to turn his attention back to France. Returning in triumph from Tunis and filled with ideas for the unification of Christendom and an attack on the Turk, only to find Francis I still in the way, the emperor met the pope in the presence of two French ambassadors (17 April 1536) and gave vent to his exasperation in a speech in which he denounced Francis I's failure to keep his promises and his subversive activities among Charles's states, and declared that unless he accepted his conditions for peace he was prepared to make war. The only alternative he could offer was a personal combat between himself and Francis: if Charles was victorious then his prize should be Burgundy, while if Francis won he should receive Milan. Paul III could not take such a performance seriously—in view of the state of Christendom the emperor's obsession with Burgundy was little short of stubborn—but Charles was serious about one thing, the renewal of war.

Yet he himself had aggravated the situation by allowing negotiations to proceed for a French candidate for Milan when in fact he had no intention of compromising. The negotiations themselves produced a direct conflict of opinion between Charles and his own ministers. Both Cobos and Granvelle urged a policy of peace even at the cost of compromising; Cobos because of his awareness of the emperor's financial position, Granvelle because of his desire to free Charles for a settlement of the conflict with the German Protestants by preserving peace on the Italian and Flemish fronts. Charles himself, however, never intended to make concessions, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he allowed his ministers to negotiate simply in order to gain time. Eventually, against the advice of his civilian counsellors but encouraged by his two chief commanders, Andrea Doria and Antonio de Leyva, Charles decided to resume hostilities. Following the success of his combined operations against Tunis in the previous year, he planned a joint attack on France by sea and land: this meant a complete redeployment of the troops that had originally been assembled for the projected invasion of Algiers in the following year and their dispatch to the front in northern Italy. Of the multiple attacks that converged on France, the invasion of the north from the Low Countries had to be abandoned for lack of money, but Charles personally advanced in the south by way of Provence in the summer of 1536, with the intention of relieving pressure on Milan by a combined operation aimed at Marseilles. The campaign itself was an unrelieved disaster and by October Charles was back in Genoa, deeper than ever in debt and militarily ruined. The war was equally costly for France, and it was mutual exhaustion that brought major operations to a halt. After peace negotiations

had failed over the emperor's demands for Milan, for French aid against the Turk and for French support for a general council, the pope managed to arrange a summit meeting at Nice between king and emperor in which neither met each other but each negotiated separately with the pope. Out of this came the Truce of Nice (18 June 1538), on the understanding that it should last ten years and with a programme of a league against the Turk, war on the Protestants, and co-operation in a general council.

Given the prevailing conditions of power, however, co-operation was the last thing to be expected, and the struggle was renewed before the truce expired, again over the question of Milan. Taking advantage of the exhaustion of the emperor's available resources in the Algiers expedition of 1541, Francis renounced the ten years truce in July 1542 and sent an invading army into the Low Countries where Charles's administration was already beset by the presence of heresy and discontent over financial exactions. Threats of this nature, however, brought the best out of Charles and he acted decisively. In order to deal an overwhelming blow against France, he renewed the English alliance (11 February 1543), ordered Cobos to scrape together all available funds in Spain and went in person to Germany to arrange a religious compromise and raise funds and troops for an attack on France from the east. Once he had contained the danger in the Low Countries, Charles then assembled an army at Metz; and while an English force invaded Normandy he himself penetrated by Champagne to within a short distance of Paris. With this advantage, and anxious to be free to tackle the Lutherans in Germany, Charles decided to negotiate at once without the participation of his English ally. By the Peace of Crépy (19 September 1544) the French king renounced his claims to the Low Countries and Naples, while the emperor offered one of two marriages to the Duke of Orleans, second son of the king of France: either his daughter Maria, with the Low Countries after Charles's death, or his niece, Anne of Hungary, with Milan a year later. Charles himself opted for the second alternative, but whether this was a serious attempt to rid himself of the burden of Milan and liquidate the Italian problem or a desperate expedient to pacify Francis I while he himself dealt with Germany cannot be certain, for the Duke of Orleans died before the plan could materialise.[20]

In view of the long prevarication of the emperor during many years of discussion about Milan, he probably at no time seriously considered alienating it or ever regarded it as anything but a fief that belonged to his dynasty.

[20] For the problem of priorities involved, however, see the authoritative discussion by F. Chabod, 'Milan o los Paises Bajos? Las discusiones en España sobre la "alternativa" de 1544', *Carlos V (1500–1558)*. Homenaje de la Universidad de Granada (Madrid, 1958), pp. 331–72.

Here as elsewhere the objectives of both monarchs remained the same as before, and the collapse of the Crépy settlement left the issues between them unsettled. Peace was welcome to the emperor because he had urgent problems to settle in Germany, and the two monarchs were at peace when Francis I died on 31 March 1547. But if the rivalry of the monarchs was now ended there remained the conflict of power and the territorial disputes between France and the Habsburg ruler. Meanwhile, Charles himself remained an intransigent dynast. In a political testament dated 18 January 1548, drawn up for his heir's guidance, he advised Philip never to abandon his claim to the Duchy of Burgundy, 'our country' (*nuestra patria*).[21]

4. Defence against the Turk: the Danube and the Mediterranean

During the later stages of the emperor's struggle with Francis I a third power, the Ottoman Turk, had intervened on the side of France to increase the pressure on Charles in western Europe just as it was already threatening his position in eastern Europe and the Mediterranean. Turkish power, like his own, was ubiquitous and Charles found it impossible to resist it with equal strength in every area. In 1526 Soliman the Magnificent began his great attack on Hungary and with a huge army he defeated and killed Louis II of Hungary and Bohemia at the battle of Mohács (29 August 1526). A few days later the Turks were in Buda, the capital of Hungary, and within striking distance of the eastern frontier of Austria, Charles's Habsburg inheritance. Towards the defence of the Danube, however, the emperor's contribution was negligible.[22] Even his Spanish subjects, compliant as they were to most of his demands, drew the line short of Habsburg interests in eastern Europe and were usually unwilling to supply troops and money for this area. Charles himself realised that he would have to delegate power here to his brother Ferdinand: he had ceded his eastern possession to him as archduke of Austria in 1522 and he continued to assist his defence preparations with some of his own revenues from Naples. Now, following the death of Louis II, Ferdinand was elected king of Bohemia and Hungary and thus extended his appanage in eastern Europe. Whether he was powerful enough to resist the Turk, however, remained to be seen.

In 1529, two years after Charles had been refused a subsidy in Spain for an expedition to Hungary, the Sultan began a second invasion. He recovered

[21] See B. Beinert, 'El testamento político de Carlos V de 1548. Estudio crítico', *Carlos V (1500–1558)*, pp. 401–38.

[22] On Charles V's policy in eastern Europe see B. Chudoba, *Spain and the Empire, 1519–1643*, pp. 61–67, 70–78.

Buda and laid siege to Vienna: this was the greatest threat the Habsburgs had yet faced. As the fate of Austria itself was at stake, Charles was forced to take direct action. In 1532 he managed to raise an army in Germany, commanded by his best generals, including Antonio de Leyva and the marquis of Vasto, and send it to the assistance of his brother. A small contingent of Spanish troops took part in the defence of Vienna and the emperor himself was present in the campaign. As a result, the Turk was forced to fall back on Buda, though he kept up a relentless attack on Hungary and Austria for many years to come. While Charles was ready to defend the Habsburg inheritance in Austria, however, he refused to commit himself to the defence of Hungary. At this point, therefore, there was a divergence of interests between himself and Ferdinand. Even during his short stay in Vienna in the autumn of 1532 the emperor made it clear that he only sought the defence of the capital of the Danube and not the liquidation of the Hungarian question, for he had other commitments which forced him to seek a pacification in eastern Europe. But although Charles considered that the fate of Hungary did not concern him directly, he did not abandon his brother completely for, on leaving Vienna, he assigned him some troops. In the course of the heavy fighting during the 1530's more units of Spanish troops arrived, but the Habsburgs had to content themselves with the defence of a narrow frontier in Hungary, and with their commitments elsewhere they were glad to accept a truce in November 1545.

Some of these commitments were also against the Turk and they too were part of a losing battle. But whereas the Spanish contribution to the defence of the Danube was on a small scale, the emperor commanded greater support for the defence of the Mediterranean where the interests of Spain were directly involved. In 1522 Soliman captured Rhodes, the island of the Knights Hospitalers, and thus secured another base from which he could direct his operations against Charles V. To attack him more directly he had an incomparable ally in Kheirredin Barbarossa, a renegade Christian and the most relentless of the African pirates. In the name of Islam and as a vassal of the Sultan, Barbarossa could direct the struggle in the western Mediterranean where he was the leader of a new power—Algiers. Spain, too, had a foothold in Africa. As outposts for the defence of her own coasts she had a chain of forts in North Africa which had been established in the reign of Ferdinand of Aragon. But the Italian diversion had caused Ferdinand to neglect to extend his African defences by seizing the interior of the Maghreb, and the opportunity once missed never occurred again. From 1516 the Barbary pirates established themselves at Algiers and through their colonisation of the interior of the Maghreb made themselves a new state in the western Mediterranean. In 1518 they placed themselves under the protection

Empress Isabella by Titian

of the Sultan and became his greatest asset in the naval war with Spain. And gradually they began to free themselves of the rival Spanish fortresses on the North African coast.

The danger was rendered even more acute by the attacks on the coast of Spain itself and by the problem of the moriscos within Spain. After the fall of Granada in 1492 and the forcible conversion of the Moors of Castile in 1502, Spain was possessed of a large alien minority, nominally Christian, never assimilated, and always regarded as a threat to internal security and a potential ally of her Islamic enemies in the Mediterranean. As large numbers of moriscos inhabited the remote and largely undefended coastal regions of southern and eastern Spain and were known to be sympathetic to the cause of Islam in North Africa, there was some justification for Spanish fears. As an act of thanksgiving for the victory of Pavia, and with an eye to internal security, Charles V decided in 1525 to extend the Castilian decree of 1502 to Valencia and to give the moriscos of that kingdom the alternative of expulsion or conversion.[23] This provoked an armed revolt in the Sierra de Espadón in 1526, and after negotiations the Moors accepted baptism in order to avoid expulsion. But the question was complicated by that of the Barbary pirates. In 1529 one of the captains of Barbarossa led a fleet of galleys in a sacking expedition against the coast of Valencia, carrying off many Spanish prisoners. And meanwhile the piracy continued as the Algerians swooped on western shipping and coasts in search of the supplies that North Africa could not afford them. Spain, having failed to complete the North African conquests of Ferdinand and Isabella, was now paying the price of neglecting her naval resources: faced by a maritime power, Charles V still produced no programme for reviving the naval strength of Catalonia, while all efforts to base an efficient navy on the south of Spain were ineffective.

It was not until the early 1530's that the emperor was able to reply to the naval power of Islam, and this was because he now had the help of his new ally, Genoa. The value of the Genoese reinforcements was seen in the success of the powerful fleet led by Andrea Doria into the Gulf of Corinth in 1532: there he was able to take Patras, while in the following year he captured Coron in the Morea, though the occupation of both was only temporary. This expedition may have had the effect of distracting the Sultan's attention and relieving the pressure on Austria, but it also provoked Soliman to greater efforts. He allied himself more closely with Barbarossa who was now appointed commander-in-chief of the Turkish fleet and showed his prowess by attacking the Italian coast and capturing Tunis from Spain's Moorish ally, Muley Hassan, in August 1534. At the same time Soliman also began

[23] See below, pp. 218–24.

to seek a closer alliance with France. It was now a struggle for control of the central Mediterranean.

From Charles and from Spain a supreme effort was necessary. Turkish naval strength was growing, and the threat was approaching closer to the coasts of Naples, Sicily, and Spain itself. To cut the Mohammedan naval front in the Mediterranean and establish a Spanish base between Algiers and Constantinople, Charles decided to strike at Tunis. The opportunity came from peace with France in 1535, while the means were supplied by an extra subsidy voted by the cortes of Castile and the seizure of private revenue from the Indies. A large, though hastily prepared, expedition—and one in which his Castilian advisers had little faith—left Barcelona and assembled in Sardinia before sailing for North Africa. In the heat of mid-June it reached Tunis, and after heavy fighting, during which Charles himself was in the front line, first La Goleta then Tunis itself were captured (21 July 1535). A fleet of eighty-two galleys was taken, thousands of Christian captives were freed, and Muley Hassan was restored to his throne. Barbarossa himself, however, escaped to take refuge in Algiers and continue the struggle from there.

Although the emperor's success in North Africa produced a profound impression in Europe and was followed by a famous winter of royal festivities in Naples, the conquest of Tunis could not in itself alter the balance of power in the Mediterranean. Charles did not have the naval strength necessary to follow up his victory and pursue Barbarossa to Algiers. Consequently, the pirate chief was able to organise new raids against the Balearic Islands and the coast of Valencia in 1536 and another large-scale attack against southern Italy in 1537, in combination with the renewed offensive by France who had already concluded her first alliance with the Turk in February 1536. Indeed Charles's war with France from 1536 to 1538 was itself a diversion from the Mediterranean campaign, which could not be renewed until after the Truce of Nice in 1538. In February of that year Charles tried to organise a new offensive against the Turk by concluding an alliance with the papacy and Venice; but the forces of the league were defeated by Barbarossa at Prevesa in September 1538 and the league itself disintegrated when Venice, always anxious for her trade and grain supplies in the eastern Mediterranean, made a separate peace with the Turk in 1540. Without the Venetian fleet the western coalition could not face the Turkish navy, and consequently Charles decided to concentrate all his available resources in the west in order to conquer Barbarossa's stronghold of Algiers and so complete the programme he had begun at Tunis. The emperor himself led a large expedition which included the conqueror of Mexico, Hernán Cortés, and which reached Algiers in October 1541. But the season was late for such a campaign and

150 of his ships were lost in a storm; although Charles landed and attacked Algiers, he was forced to re-embark and abandon the operation in order to avoid yet greater disaster.

Algiers was one of the greatest catastrophes of the emperor's career and the last of his major naval actions. From now on his position in the Mediterranean deteriorated rapidly. When the struggle with France was renewed (1542–44), the Turk was able to be of great service to his ally and French galleys reinforced the Turkish navy. Barbarossa co-operated in the siege of Nice and in 1544 the Turkish fleet wintered in Toulon together with its cargo of Christian slaves. On the death of Barbarossa in 1546 another experienced pirate, Dragut, took his place and continued his campaign. In August 1551, forty years after its conquest by Spain, Tripoli was attacked by the Turk and had to be evacuated by the Knights Hospitalers; in the hands of the Turk it became another useful base and another link in the chain with Algiers.[24] Other outposts on the North African coast fell gradually into Moslem hands and the Sultan continued to send out powerful fleets to attack the coasts of the central Mediterranean. There was a point, however, beyond which the Sultan could not press his advantage: distracted by war with Persia and weakened by the growing uncertainty of French co-operation once his fleets had crossed the vast distances of the Mediterranean, he was unable to achieve naval supremacy in the west. It was the factor of distance rather than the strength of Spain, or indeed of any Christian power, which earned a short respite for the west. Nevertheless, the Sultan's North African allies continued to menace the security of the western Mediterranean and to harry trade and shipping between Spain and Italy. The Barbary pirates infested that part of the Mediterranean between Sardinia and the African coast, thus forcing Christian shipping to keep to the safer routes near Cape Corsica; but the French occupation of Corsica, undertaken with the help of the Turk, threatened communications between Spain and Italy even here, and there was no respite for Charles in the defence of the maritime routes of his empire.

Consequently, far from accomplishing the great crusade against Constantinople which was the dream of his younger years, Charles V was unable to provide even for Spain's immediate interests. It is true that he never obtained the full co-operation of Aragon and Catalonia, an essential condition for Spanish supremacy in the western Mediterranean.[25] But the fact remains that he himself diverted national resources and efforts to remoter imperial interests.

[24] See Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 739–42.

[25] J. Vicens Vives, 'La Corona de Aragón y el ámbito del Mediterráneo Occidental durante la época de Carlos V', *Karl V. Der Kaiser und seine Zeit* (Cologne, 1960), pp. 211–17.

For naval power depends not on hastily prepared expeditions but on a long and arduous process of building, recruiting, and training. Such a programme was never undertaken by Charles V and had to await the initiative of Philip II.

5. Princes and Protestants in Germany

For the emperor the problem of Protestantism was even more complex than that of the Turk, and it was this which finally reduced his policy to ruins. Not only was it linked with his struggle against France, it also affected his relations with the papacy. Above all, it undermined his already precarious position in Germany. Yet even without its political content Protestantism already had profound significance for the emperor and for Spain. Although Charles V was not a man of the Counter-Reformation, or the leader of a spiritual revival in the Catholic Church, he was totally hostile to heresy and if he had possessed the means he would have destroyed it, as he attempted to do in Spain and the Low Countries where he disposed of more power than he did in Germany. This was also the Spanish position and here the coincidence of views was spontaneous. Troops and money for the battle against heretics came above all from Spain, and many of the great intellectual leaders combating the Reformation, such as Ignatius Loyola, came from Spain. The assembly of a council, to which Lutherans would be summoned to have their doctrines condemned and where the dogma and traditions of the Catholic Church would be reaffirmed, was an idea canvassed by Spanish theologians as well as by their king. After the sack of Rome in 1527, and in reply to a protesting brief of Clement VII, Charles already used this threat and spoke of appealing to a general council if the pope did not change his policy, which the emperor regarded as disastrous for Christendom. But he could not overcome the reluctance and the suspicion of the papacy until the pontificate of Paul III, and even then complications arose to delay decisive action. This was due not only to the fact that the conciliar movement traditionally aroused papal susceptibilities, but also to Rome's awareness of the extent of Charles V's power. The Catholic concord that the emperor was seeking was to be a concord under his inspiration and his hegemony, and implied the preservation and perhaps extension of a European empire which was unacceptable to his neighbours and inevitably aroused the suspicion of France, which in spite of imperial and Spanish opinion was also a Catholic power. And without denying the sincerity of the emperor, it is necessary to take into account the contemporary tendency to adopt religious justifications, especially in official statements, for secular policies. There is also the fact that in spite of the divine mission that the emperor claimed to fight infidels and heretics, he did not give priority to the Protestant revolt,

any more than he did to the threat from Islam. He himself argued that he could not do this until he had pacified western Europe and reached an understanding with the pope and with France. But apart from the fact that he himself was an obstacle to such an understanding, his long preoccupation with the means prevented him from accomplishing the end.

In spite of the declaration made by the young emperor before the Diet of Worms in April 1521, the first of the great policy statements written by himself, in which he declared his resolve to undertake the defence of Christendom and the doctrines of the church, the fact remains that Charles underestimated the differences between Luther and the church, and delayed committing himself to decisive action. Admittedly the situation was difficult. Charles already had a political problem in Germany deriving from the sovereignty of the estates and the independence of the princes, both of which frustrated his desire to give meaning and sanction to imperial government; and with his commitments elsewhere, Charles had to delegate responsibility in Germany to his brother Ferdinand. Religion reinforced politics. Although Luther was declared an outlaw by the Edict of Worms, he was able to live under the protection of the Elector of Saxony while what Charles regarded as a temporary schism hardened into a lasting breach, the political advantages of which were exploited by reformers and princes alike. In June 1526 a vague declaration by the Diet at Speyer was interpreted as allowing each prince to decide religion in his own state. In 1529, in another Diet at Speyer, a Catholic majority reaffirmed the decision of Worms against Lutheranism, and while denying any rights to reformers, demanded toleration for Catholics in reforming states. This decision, which appeared successful on the surface, was the beginning of the road to disaster for Charles and for the Catholic cause. The Lutherans protested against it and began to improve their political organisation. At this point Charles decided to take personal action; freed from war with France since the Peace of Cambrai (1529) and fresh from his coronation at the hands of the pope, he returned to Germany after eight years' absence and was present at the Diet of Augsburg in 1530. In the emperor's party at Augsburg there were numerous Erasmists, including his secretary Granvelle, and although it is doubtful whether he himself was influenced by the ideas of Erasmus, Charles exercised the greatest patience during the long disputations and attempted to find a solution which would not compromise Catholic dogma. But his arbitration failed, and even his offer to arrange a general council was rejected by the Protestants, as it was by the pope. The Protestants emerged from Augsburg with their own formula rejected but intact—the profession of faith presented by Melancthon and known as the Confession of Augsburg—and this now managed to survive. Short of force, there was nothing Charles

could do, and he did not wish to use force. Threats without sanctions, therefore, had little effect except to encourage the Protestants to improve their political position by forming the League of Schmalkalden (February 1531), directed by the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse, and a potential ally of Charles's other enemies in northern Europe.

But the Empire was also threatened by the Turk. Charles's brother Ferdinand, who had just received the title of King of the Romans (January 1531), desperately needed the help of the German princes to defend his dominions against Soliman. The Turkish invasion of Austria in 1532 forced Charles to make a temporary settlement in Germany, known as the Peace of Nuremburg (May 1532), by which a general peace was established within the Empire where no one would be condemned for religious beliefs until a council be held. The measure was effective for its purpose, and with Protestant support Charles was able to raise a powerful army which liberated Austria and forced the Turk to retreat.

Throughout the 1530's Charles V had to continue the policy of temporising with the Protestants, partly because of the Turk, whose pressure was relentless in this period, partly because of France, but above all perhaps because of his desperate financial position. For all these reasons the emperor wanted a united front in Germany, and to secure this he was ready to compromise still further. Moreover, both Charles and Granvelle were convinced that the emperor had the right to resolve religious problems, if necessary without the intervention of the pope, and they believed that a Catholic restoration ought to begin with the suppression of abuses in the church. Theoretically, therefore, Paul III should have been the answer to their hopes, for he was a reforming pope and anxious for a council.[26] But now it was discovered that this was merely a further embarrassment to Charles, for it raised the problem of Protestant participation in a council. In default of a council, therefore, and anxious for the help of the imperial estates against France and the Turk, Charles decided to impose his own solution in Germany—the Declaration of Ratisbonne (July 1541). This guaranteed safety to adherents of the Augsburg Confession, sanctioned some secularisation of ecclesiastical property, granted the Protestant princes the right to reform monasteries and other religious institutions, and increased the influence of Protestants in the imperial chamber.

The pope condemned the Declaration of Ratisbonne, and events condemned it too. The emperor gained nothing from it, except the knowledge that the more he yielded to the Protestants, the greater his weakness was exposed and the higher their demands were raised. Yet still he was not ready to act. In June 1542 Paul III published a bull calling the Council of

[26] See L. von Pastor, *History of the Popes* (Eng. trans., London, 1894–1953), xi. 41–217.

Trent for 1 November; but at this point Francis I broke the Truce of Nice and prepared to attack the emperor; consequently no council was possible at that date. The pope tried to reconcile the two rivals, but Charles was playing for time, anxious for the assistance of Maurice of Saxony, Albert of Brandenburg, and other German princes against France, and knowing that the Protestants were opposed to a council called by the pope. But having signed the Peace of Crépy with Francis I in September 1544, Charles was in a position to attack Protestantism more firmly. Yet it was still not to be a theological attack. When the Council of Trent finally opened in December 1545, the emperor's representatives tried to prevent any dogmatic definition of the problem of justification, because he did not want to alienate the Lutherans whom he still hoped would accept the invitation to join the council. The council did in fact define the doctrine of justification and of the sacraments, and the emperor's state of mind when he decided to join battle with the Protestants was one of resentment against the pope and other bishops.

Many Catholics in the following of the emperor, including his own confessor, the Spanish Dominican Pedro de Soto, had long been advocating war, without, however, resolving the dilemna of how to deal with a religious movement by military means.[27] But the Protestants themselves had a political and military organisation, and it was this which the emperor hoped to overcome when an alliance with the papacy (June 1546) and the efforts of Cobos in Spain gave him sufficient funds to raise an army. The imperial troops, commanded by the Duke of Alba and headed by the emperor himself, won the battle of Mühlberg on 24 April 1547, a victory in which the confusion on the imperial side—redeemed as usual by the bravery of Charles's Spanish troops—was only slightly less than that of the Protestants. Charles's triumph over the League of Schmalkalden at last put him in a position in which he could attempt to impose his own political and religious settlement in Germany. The result of both, however, was another setback to the imperial cause.

Harmful though it was to the Protestants, the emperor's victory at Mühlberg also increased dissensions within the Catholic camp. The church itself was fearful of Charles's power, and the Council of Trent scattered after the emperor's victory; those prelates who supported Charles remained in Trent, while the rest reassembled in Bologna according to the pope's instructions; later the entire council was prorogued owing to Charles's opposition. Acting independently of the papacy and on the assumption that

[27] On de Soto see V. D. Carro, *Pedro de Soto y las controversias político-teológicas en el siglo XVI* (Salamanca, 1931); and the same author's *El maestro Fr. Pedro de Soto, O.P. (confesor de Carlos V)* (Salamanca, 1931).

he himself could exercise ecclesiastical functions, the emperor imposed another compromise known as the Interim (30 June 1548), a document drawn up by his theologians, among them Pedro de Soto, which preserved Catholic doctrine and the authority of the pope but made every possible concession to Lutheran opinion in matters of discipline and worship. There were signs that the emperor's religious policy was not entirely acceptable to Spanish opinion, and the Jesuit Bobadilla, who circulated a criticism of the Interim under the very nose of Charles, had to be censured. Indeed the Interim suffered the fate of most religious compromises: it was attacked simultaneously by Protestants and Catholics alike, and it failed to secure the objective for which it was intended—religious peace in Germany.

While Charles's religious settlement caused dissension within the church, his political aims caused dissension among the Habsburgs themselves. Francis I had already died before the battle of Mühlberg, and after it the emperor had his hands free in Germany. Here was the opportunity to secure his political ideal and the interests of his family by realising a wish that was dear to his heart: he would obtain the imperial succession in Germany for his son Philip, and so bind the German heritage with the Burgundian and Spanish ones. Such a solution, however, was not acceptable to German opinion, either Catholic or Protestant: in November 1550 even the Cardinal of Augsburg was moved to protest against the intolerable presence of Spaniards in Germany and to declare that Germany would only accept a German prince at its head. Furthermore, Charles also encountered the inflexible opposition of his own family.

Summoned by his father from Spain, where he had been Regent since 1542, Philip had left Valladolid in October 1548. He was twenty-one, and it was his first tour of Europe. He joined his father in Brussels in April 1549 and was there recognised as inheritor of the Low Countries. He was then paraded in Germany. At Augsburg during the winter of 1550–51 the Habsburgs had a family conference lasting more than six months, during which Charles's plans were frustrated by the ambitions of his brother Ferdinand and the hostility of his nephew Maximilian, Ferdinand's eldest son. The power of the eastern Habsburgs, based in Austria, extending to Bohemia and Hungary, and crowned with the title of King of the Romans, an appanage which Charles himself had helped to create, was now turned against him, in circumstances which made him helpless to resist it. For the growing independence of the eastern Habsburgs coincided with powerful interests in Germany. In so far as Germany refused to accept political subordination and Catholic laws, it refused to accept a Spanish régime which personified both, and further rejected the prospect of being held by Spanish and Italian troops. Therefore, German opinion turned towards the princes

of Vienna, whom it believed could be managed more easily than a Spanish successor could be; it was Ferdinand it wanted as emperor, with Maximilian, not Philip, to succeed him. Ferdinand's growing influence in central Europe and his determination to keep the empire, already implicit in his title of King of the Romans, forced Charles to compromise in the agreement of 9 March 1551, by which Ferdinand would succeed Charles as emperor but in turn would support Philip as his successor, with Maximilian coming a poor third. The agreement, however, remained a dead letter, not because of the poor impression the young Philip made in Germany, as he did everywhere outside of Spain, but because facts were against it. The determination of the Austrian Habsburgs and the hostility of Germany combined to frustrate Charles's aspirations for his dynasty. It only remained for the events of 1551–52 to push him right out of Germany.

France played the major rôle in the growing offensive against the emperor, seeing in his difficulties in Germany the vital opportunity to reduce his power once and for all. The Protestant princes of Germany reached an understanding with Henry II and consented to his taking Metz, Toul, and Verdun which were part of the Empire: and the enemies of Charles were now joined by another German prince, Maurice of Saxony, who in spite of being a Protestant had hitherto fought on the side of the emperor. France also renewed her link with the Turk and urged the Sultan to break his truce with the Habsburgs. In August 1551 the Turk took Tripoli. Beset by dangers on many fronts and by worse financial difficulties than he had yet experienced, Charles saw his world disintegrating. Unable to cope on every front and fearing above all for the Mediterranean, he took one of the most momentous decisions of his career: he ordered his Spanish and Italian troops to evacuate Württemberg in August. By withdrawing his forces of occupation, Charles indirectly prepared the way for the German explosion of 1552. To garrison Germany he now had to rely on his brother Ferdinand, whose commitments in Hungary left him little resources or enthusiasm for Charles's cause and whose relations with the rebels in Germany itself were an object of great suspicion to the emperor. In these circumstances it would have been wiser for Charles to take refuge in the comparative safety of the Low Countries and strike at France from there; instead he continued to expose himself in Germany, and when Maurice of Saxony made a sudden raid against him near Innsbruck in May 1552 he had to take to flight across the Alps to Villach in Carinthia. The second session of the Council of Trent was quickly closed; Metz, Toul, and Verdun fell to France; and the Turk was threatening Austria. There was little to salvage from the disaster in Germany, and the Treaty of Passau, negotiated by Ferdinand and Maurice and ratified by Charles on 15 August 1552, merely ratified the emperor's defeat. In its recognition of

Protestantism as the equal of the Catholic religion in the Empire on a basis of *cujus regio, ejus religio*, the Treaty of Passau foreshadowed the Peace of Augsburg three years later (25 September 1555), when constitutional form was given to these concessions. Augsburg was the logical culmination of the emperor's policy and weakness in Germany, though he bitterly regretted it and left its negotiation to Ferdinand.

After his defeat in Germany, Charles also failed against France. Encouraged by the Duke of Alba and anxious for his communications between the Low Countries and Franche-Comté, he attempted to recover Metz in the winter of 1552; again and again his army attacked until in January 1553 he was forced to raise the ruinous siege and retire to the Low Countries where he remained until his return to Spain in 1556. For now he had reason to fear for the security of his first inheritance. If Germany were lost, and with it a Catholic and imperial frontier beyond Flanders, and if France were threatening, then it was necessary at least to secure the Low Countries. In his later years this became one of the greatest anxieties of the emperor, his return to the point of departure. Love for his native land and concern for his son caused him to separate the Low Countries from the Empire. But how could he defend them, distant and isolated as they were, and how could he secure their communications with Spain, now more clearly than ever the base of his power?

6. The Low Countries and the English Alliance

In the Low Countries, unlike Germany, Charles had a Regent whom he could trust. After the death of Margaret of Austria, he appointed another Habsburg, his sister Mary of Hungary, as governor in the Low Countries in 1531. For the rest of his reign she applied his rule with as much firmness and tact as the circumstances permitted. These, however, were not propitious, for Charles was faced by mounting religious and economic discontent.

Lutheranism had a foothold in the Low Countries from about 1518. Much as he disliked Lutheranism, however, Charles also disliked papal intervention, and for the rest of his reign he sought to keep religious policy in his own hands. Two months after the Bull excommunicating Luther, the emperor issued an edict ordering the burning of all Lutheran books (20 March 1521). A year later (23 April 1522), without consulting the pope, he appointed an Inquisitor general of the Low Countries, Van der Hulst, who as well as being a layman was also a member of the Council of Brabant and therefore an official of the king. Charles's attempt to establish exclusive control of the Inquisition, however, was checked when in 1523 Adrian VI appointed Van der Hulst papal Inquisitor for the Low Countries, and although he was soon

deposed by Margaret of Austria on account of the reckless persecution in which he indulged, this ended the emperor's attempt to introduce imperial Inquisitors in the Low Countries; in 1524 three native priests were appointed papal Inquisitors with full powers, though later Charles insisted on the agreement of a member of the provincial council before any sentence could be passed. From 1525 Charles V published new and various edicts against Lutheranism, accompanied by severe sanctions; indeed, from 1550 the only penalty prescribed for all religious offences was death. At first judicial power rested with city councils, but later Charles transferred this jurisdiction to provincial councils and so kept the persecution of heretics in his own hands.[28]

While he managed to contain, though not terminate, the progress of heresy, the emperor could make little headway against the political and fiscal particularism of his various provinces. Of all his possessions the Low Countries enjoyed the greatest prosperity, based on the secure foundations of trade and industry, and they were, with Spain, his greatest source of money and one which he ruthlessly tapped. As it was their own wealth which the emperor's wars were devouring, they had even more urgent reasons than Spain for demanding peace, and they never ceased to demand it. The prosperity and liberty of the Low Countries under Charles V, however, which are invariably contrasted with the misery and oppression prevailing under Philip II,[29] were the monopoly of a small class, and the fortunes made by a few in the earlier period were accompanied by desperate poverty for the mass of the people especially in the towns, whose wages lagged far behind prices during the entire period from 1521 to 1556.[30] These social conditions bred discontent and erupted in the agitation of the Anabaptists, whose movement was essentially a proletarian one, with social as well as religious implications, and who received the relentless attention of the authorities on both accounts from 1535 onwards. There were no Anabaptists among the propertied classes, whose approval of the government's policy of repression prevented the movement from becoming a popular challenge to state authority as Calvinism later did.

Such an alliance, however, did not sustain every aspect of Charles's policy. The trading and industrial communities of the Low Countries were careful to exercise their autonomous rights against the attempts of the emperor to complete the process of unification and centralisation begun by his Burgundian

[28] Léon-E. Halkin, *La Réforme en Belgique sous Charles Quint* (Brussels, 1957); M. Dierickx, S.J., 'Fue cesaropapista la política religiosa de Carlos V en los Paises Bajos?' *Hispania*, xix. (1959), 378–85.

[29] See below, pp. 288–97, including a fuller treatment of subject.

[30] C. Verlinden, 'Crises économiques et sociales en Belgique à l'époque de Charles-Quint, *Charles-Quint et son temps*, pp. 177–90.

predecessors. To the organs of central government—the Council of State, the Council of Finance and the High Court of Appeal—the provincial Estates and the Estates General maintained a stubborn resistance, haggling over money, insisting on redress of grievances and exercising their right to report back to their provinces and towns. Charles never attempted to introduce Spaniards into his Burgundian administration, but even with native officials he found he could not be so absolute in the land of his birth as he was in Castile and that his relentless financial demands might strain the alliance with the propertied classes on which his rule depended. In 1539 resistance in Ghent broke out into violent revolt—firmly suppressed—when the citizens overthrew the authorities who had complied with Charles's demands.

Resistance to the religious, financial, and administrative policies of the central government made the Low Countries a useful field of intervention for the emperor's enemies, particularly for France, who on occasion could co-operate effectively with his opponents in the north-east. Charles had his most harrowing experience of this danger in the duchy of Guelders where he encountered some of his bitterest enemies, who, with French money and support, kept up a steady attack on his position in the Low Countries. It was 1543 before he could annex Guelders and secure his north-eastern frontier in the Low Countries. By 1552, however, with Germany lost and France hostile and his rule in Flanders far from absolute in spite of his personal popularity there, he had reason to fear not only for his north-eastern frontier but for the whole of his Burgundian inheritance.

It was in these circumstances that the English alliance became the solution to the German disaster, to French threats, and to the danger to the Low Countries.[31] For the purposes of defence and communications with Spain, it could secure an English port and the Channel passage. But it might secure much more than that. By marrying Philip to Queen Mary, England itself could be brought into the Habsburg orbit. The marriage between Philip and Mary (25 July 1554) meant much to both parties. Mary sought in Philip a support for her plans of a Catholic restoration in England and looked for an heir to continue her régime. The emperor and his son saw England as a compensation for the loss of Germany and a security for the Low Countries. By the marriage, England and the Low Countries were associated in a personal union. As Philip was to inherit Spain as well as the Low Countries, this meant that the crowns of Spain, Burgundy, and England would be temporarily joined in one person. If Philip and Mary had an heir, he would inherit not only England but also the Low Countries and Franche-Comté,

[31] For a good treatment of the English marriage and alliance see Royall Tyler, *The Emperor Charles the Fifth*, pp. 180–231.

while Spain and its dominions would pass to Philip's son by a previous marriage, Don Carlos. This would enable England to guard the Low Countries, especially against France, while Spain could concentrate on the defence of Italy and the Mediterranean. And if Don Carlos died without an heir, then the entire inheritance would go to the heir of Philip and Mary.

In envisaging a possible separation of the Low Countries from the crown of Spain, though with the intention of keeping it more firmly within his family, Charles V evidently did not regard the union of the two to be inevitable and sacrosanct, from the point of view either of Spanish interests or prestige. It was only later, in the reign of Philip II, that the separation of the two came to be regarded as inconceivable and that the determination to possess the Low Countries at all costs became a ruinous obsession which lasted until the end of the Habsburg régime. But when the moment of decision came, Charles V did in fact preserve all those territories united to the crown of Spain for the inheritance of his son. By then, however, the possibility of leaving them to a grandson had disappeared and he had no desire to leave them to Ferdinand of Austria. For the son whom Philip and Mary desired never came, and the only result of the match was to make Spaniards highly unpopular in England; soon national and religious sentiment combined with maritime rivalry to ruin relations between the two nations.

Meanwhile, the waning prospect of an eventual Anglo-Spanish empire was a profound relief to Henry II of France and reinforced his opposition to the emperor. The accession of Paul IV to the papacy brought another enemy of the Habsburgs to the international scene and heralded new difficulties for them in all parts, especially in Italy. Charles V could take no more. For years, sick and disillusioned and prematurely old, he had been waiting for the time to renounce his heavy burden to his son. Better to give Philip his inheritance now, during his father's lifetime, than to risk an improvised accession amidst the disorders of war after his death.

Already in January 1548 the emperor had recorded his political testament for his son.[32] In 1550 he had begun to dictate his memoirs. Five years later he judged the time had come. On 25 October 1555, before the assembly of the Estates General in Brussels and after recording his life work in a speech which moved himself and his audience to tears, Charles abdicated to Philip the sovereignty of the Low Countries. Three months later (16 January 1556), in the house in which he lived on the outskirts of Brussels, he handed to his secretary the abdication of all his Spanish dominions in the Old World and the New. The renunciation was made in three different documents and corresponded to the nature of the Habsburg monarchy. In one he renounced the crown of Castile and León, together with the kingdom of Navarre and the

[32] B. Beinert, *op. cit.*, pp. 401–38.

Indies; in another he renounced the crown of Aragon-Catalonia, with the kingdom of Sardinia; in the third he renounced the crown of Sicily. The kingdom of Naples and the duchy of Milan were already in the hands of Philip since the time of his marriage with Mary Tudor when Charles had given them to him in order to increase the value of the new husband and give him a royal title. As a last gesture—though it had little significance apart from reflecting his financial difficulties—he even managed to sign a truce with Henry II of France (5 February 1556) and to transfer Franche-Comté to his son. Now he only had the Empire, where in reality his brother Ferdinand had ruled from 1553. This, too, he renounced, in September 1556, though it was not until February 1558 that the electors accepted his abdication and elected Ferdinand in his place. In September 1556, leaving Philip in the Low Countries, Charles sailed for Spain and in February of the following year reached Yuste, the remote and peaceful monastery in Extremadura where he chose to spend his last years, hardly in retirement, for he was still nominally emperor, retained a keen interest in international affairs and continued to advise and help his son. There he died on 21 September 1558.

In returning to Spain to die, a Spain that he had already detached from Germany, Charles V recognised the direction his empire had been taking for many years. Imperial dreams had died with the loss of Germany and the division of Italy. The Low Countries and Spain remained the twin pillars of Habsburg power in Europe, and of the two Spain was the richest source of money and troops and the natural base of the Habsburg monarchy. The administration and the finances of the monarchy, which had never succeeded in becoming imperial, were now clearly Spanish. The Council of Italy, created in 1555, was a sign that Mediterranean policy was ceasing to be that of an empire and becoming part of Spanish foreign policy, or perhaps of *Spanish* imperialism. The decision revealed the presence of a new generation —of Philip II, who was not an emperor but an absolute monarch, and of Castilians, whose near monopoly of viceregal and conciliar government underlined the preponderance of Spain. While this corresponded more closely to the realities of power, it also meant that the varieties of choice available under Charles V were replaced by a monolithic régime that was Spanish in personnel and in objectives. Nevertheless the mark of imperialism left on Spanish policy by Charles V could never be effaced, and the legacy of overseas commitments, especially in the Low Countries, remained to haunt Spain for a century and a half to come.

CHAPTER IV

SPAIN DURING THE PRICE REVOLUTION

1. The People

To sixteenth-century observers the most striking feature of the Spanish landscape was its emptiness.[1] Not far from the Ebro, for example, with its irrigated fields, its lines of trees and its industrious moriscos, were the barren heaths of Aragon stretching monotonously to the horizon. Francesco Guicciardini, envoy of Florence to Ferdinand of Aragon, travelled across this region in the spring of 1512 and was depressed by the 'utterly deserted country, where there is not a lodging to be found nor a tree to be seen, only vast stretches of rosemary and heather, for this is arid land'.[2] Even fruitful Andalucía had its deserts, inhabited not by human beings but by wild beasts, the terror of mules and their riders. It was no coincidence that Don Quixote and Sancho travelled most of the time in solitude along deserted routes. Much of Spain was, indeed, deserted, and if its land was ill-cultivated it was partly because it was under-populated.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century Spain had a population of over seven million, and although this was higher than that of England (barely three million) it was much smaller than France's fifteen million and smaller still than the twenty-two million of the Ottoman empire and its satellite states.[3] Yet after her civil wars and during a period of relative prosperity, Spain's population increased steadily throughout the sixteenth century and suffered no catastrophic decline until the years around 1600. In Castile the population rose from 7,414,000 in 1541 to 8,485,000 in 1591–94, an increase of about 15 per cent. The recovery of Catalonia was slower: the figures available for 1553 indicate a population of less than 40,000, which was only a tenth of that of 1359, but here too there was an improvement in the second

[1] The composite work edited by J. Vicens Vives, *Historia social y económica de España y América* (5 vols., Barcelona, 1957–59), supplies the previous lack of a good general account of Spanish economic and social history; the sixteenth century is covered in vol. iii with contributions by J. Reglá and G. Céspedes del Castillo.

[2] Quoted in Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, p. 350.

[3] Population figures for the sixteenth century have become increasingly clear, thanks to modern research: see Jordi Nadal, *La población española (siglos xvi a xx)* (3rd ed., Barcelona, 1973), pp. 16, 28–37.

half of the century and recovery lasted longer than that of Castile.[4] The population of Spain, however, was not evenly distributed among the various regions: Castile was much more densely populated than the peripheral areas, and in 1591, with 6,910,000 inhabitants, it had a density of 18·2 inhabitants to one kilometre compared with 11·8 among the 1,180,000 inhabitants of Aragon, and 12·1 among the 145,000 inhabitants of Navarre.[5]

Even within Castile the distribution of population underwent important shifts in the sixteenth century, symptomatic perhaps of the increase in the number of inhabitants. Internally, there was the movement of northerners towards the south, drawn by the Andalusian monopoly of the Indies trade; in the course of only sixty years (1530–90) Seville doubled the number of its inhabitants from 45,000 to 90,000, while many towns of Castile, like Medina del Campo and Valladolid, whose prosperity had been based on their commercial and financial relations with northern Europe and suffered during the war years in the second half of the century, experienced a considerable loss of population from about 1575.[6] Another shift of population occurred as a result of the rebellion of the Alpujarras between 1566 and 1571, which was followed by the dispersal of the moriscos of Granada throughout northern Castile; in this case the vacuum was partly filled by settling colonists from northern and central Spain. Finally, sheer lack of subsistence might force people to migrate to other parts of the country, in Castile from rural areas to the towns, in Catalonia from the Pyrenees to the plains. In addition to internal movements of people, however, there was also the factor of emigration, some of it compulsory as in the case of the Jews in 1492, some of it voluntary, to America. The number of Spaniards who emigrated to America in the course of the sixteenth century was much lower than has been supposed, under 150,000 by the 1550's.[7] For contemporary states, however, this was a considerable exodus of manpower, and raises the question—to which there is still no answer—did Spain become a colonial power because she had the manpower to sustain her discoveries, or even because the growth of her population beyond her domestic resources forced her to expand?

On the other hand, the departure of Spaniards from the mother country

[4] J. Vicens Vives, *Apuntes del curso de Historia Económica de España* (2 vols., Barcelona, 1956), i. 289–91; J. Nadal and E. Giralt, *La population catalane de 1553 à 1717: l'immigration française et les autres facteurs de son développement* (Paris, 1960), p. 19.

[5] Bartolomé Bennassar, *Valladolid au Siècle d'Or* (Paris, 1970), pp. 152–208.

[6] On Seville see Ruth Pike, 'Seville in the Sixteenth Century', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, xli. (1961), 1–30.

[7] See below, p. 157.

was accompanied by the immigration of many foreigners into Spain.[8] The number of Frenchmen crossing the Pyrenees, lured by the wealth of Seville and the Indies trade, and in eastern Spain even by the prospect of manual work, increased steadily in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries; in Catalonia Gascons formed 20 per cent. of the population at the end of the sixteenth century and provided an important labour force in the rural areas. But the most powerful group of foreign immigrants was that of the Genoese. From the thirteenth century they had a substantial colony in Seville, while in the Mediterranean they were commercial rivals of Barcelona. All the privileges acquired during this time and revoked by Ferdinand of Aragon in 1500 were restored by Charles V as a reward for the spectacular volte-face of Andrea Doria in 1528, when he took his service from France to Spain. From that year Genoese bankers played a major rôle in Spanish state finances, together with the Welsers and Fuggers, acquiring the most remunerative revenues, *juros*, monopolies and commercial privileges in return for their numerous loans to the crown. Their situation was further improved after the separation of Spain from the German Empire, and they ended by supplanting their rivals from the north, including the Fuggers. In addition, they took a large share of American treasure, partly as a return on their loans to the crown, partly from their own participation in the Indies trade, which included valuable contracts for the supply of negro slaves. Taking root in Spain, hispanised Genoese entered the councils and the church and commanded Spanish armies and fleets. Indeed, owing to their economic and thus indirectly their political power, they could almost be regarded as part of the Spanish ruling class. For few Spaniards took part in industry and commerce; the majority of them lived on and from the land.

The social structure of Spain was based almost exclusively on ownership of land, most of which was in the hands of the nobility and the church. The virtual monopoly of landed wealth enjoyed by the aristocracy was legally protected by the device of *mayorazgo*, or entail, which, combined with the principle of primogeniture, tied estates in perpetuity to the same family and prevented alienation. Ruthlessly exploited, the system tended to concentrate land in the hands of a few powerful families, some of whose estates in Andalucía survive to the present day. The Laws of Toro (1505)

[8] On French immigration see J. Nadal and E. Giralt, *La population catalane de 1553 à 1717: l'immigration française et les autres facteurs de son développement* (Paris, 1960); on the rôle of the Genoese in Spain see R. S. Lopez, 'Il predominio economico dei Genovesi nella monarchia spagnola', *Giornale storico e letterario dell Liguria*, xii. (1936), 65–74. The general topic is covered in A. Girard, 'Les étrangers dans la vie économique le l'Espagne au XVI[e] et XVII[e] siècles', *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*, v. (1933), 567–78.

regulated and extended the process by making what had previously been an exclusive privilege of the nobility into an institution of civil law. Commoners, or those who could afford to, took advantage of the measure to establish small *mayorazgos*, and while this possibly reduced the monopoly of the older aristocracy, it also increased the immobility of landed wealth in Spain and its stagnation.

Based on their vast latifundia and protected by the law of entail, the Spanish aristocracy were also favoured by economic conditions in the sixteenth century. In an age of rising prices landowners were sheltered from the effects of inflation by their ability to profit from it. Agricultural prices rose much faster than non-agricultural prices during the first three-quarters of the sixteenth century, and from 1575 to 1625 the two groups remained together.[9] Unlike the industrial exporter, however, whose goods were eventually priced out of the foreign market, the agricultural producer in Spain could increase his income not only by exploiting his land and selling its vital produce—corn, wool, and cattle—but also by raising his rents at a time when land was appreciating in value. The income from rents increased with the rise in prices, with the result that the nobility, who despised work and regarded business as debasing, was one of the few sectors of Spanish society that did not suffer from the price revolution.

The aristocracy's loss of political power, therefore, must be seen in the context of its economic strength. It had surrendered its feudal rôle to the demands of absolute monarchy and was now content to serve the crown in the subordinate fields of war, diplomacy, and viceregal administration. For this it was compensated by the extension of its economic power, a process in which the crown itself was a willing ally. And although the feudal power of the nobles declined at a national level, it survived in their own districts in the form of seigneurial jurisdiction over their vassals, which enabled them to collect feudal dues, appoint local officials and even render justice. Such power originated in natural conditions which still prevailed in sixteenth-century Spain, whose vast and arid plains needed a large and disciplined manpower to cultivate them. Spain inherited its machinery of irrigation intact from the Moors, together with the personnel necessary for its operation. In the sixteenth century it was still the moriscos, protected but virtually owned by their aristocratic masters, who cultivated the plains of Lérida, Valencia, Murcia, and Granada.[10] Seigneurial jurisdiction survived in its most primitive form, however, in Aragon, where it was protected against the crown by the *fueros*, in which aristocratic privileges sheltered

[9] E. J. Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain, 1501–1560*, p. 261; Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 631–32.
[10] Braudel, *op. cit.*, 64.

under territorial autonomy. An Aragonese lord could rule his vassal almost absolutely, and in certain cases had power to condemn him to the garrotte or sell him to the galleys. And although the harshness of this régime was assuaged by the increasing castilianisation of Aragon and the occasional intervention of the crown, even Philip II in 1591 dared not abolish their sacred *fueros*.[11]

In Castile, on the other hand, the aristocracy was tamed. Philip II continued the policy of his predecessors and governed with the help of humble commoners, posting the more powerful members of the nobility, such as the Dukes of Medina Celi, Alcalá, Albuquerque, and Medina Sidonia, to distant viceroyalties or other assignments. An administration staffed by university-trained jurists strove with increasing success to replace seigneurial by royal justice, which would usually support a vassal against his lord. Private franchises were attacked; in 1559 the crown resumed by purchase the enormous privileges of the Admiral of Castile, whose jurisdiction had extended to all the 'dry ports' of Castile and the customs houses of the Biscayan ports.[12] Gradually, in spite of exceptions like the Duke of Alba and the Duke of Feria, the Castilian nobility was deprived of political significance. Yet a vestige of its power survived even under the weight of royal absolutism. In 1538 all the authority and persuasion of Charles V could not obtain from the noble estate of the cortes of Castile the grant of an additional tax.[13] And the crown never disputed the landed wealth of the aristocracy or attempted to strike at the source of its power. Consequently, under the feeble successors of Philip II the Spanish aristocracy was to make yet another bid for political supremacy.

The landed wealth of the nobility and their immunity from taxation made their class the ideal to which all Spaniards aspired. In 1520 Charles V established a distinction between grandees and *titulos*: the number of the former was reduced to twenty, and the two corps together had no more than sixty members in 1525. By 1581, however, the number had risen to a hundred, while the hordes of claimants to gentry status were innumerable. For titles of nobility could be bought, and the financial needs of the crown drew it to sell more and more *hidalgulas* to those capable of buying them —merchants, *nouveaux riches* from the Indies, and *letrados* in the royal administration, whose humble origins bred a burning ambition to noble status. The practice was constantly attacked by the cortes of Castile on the grounds that titles of nobility procured for the buyer exemption from taxation and increased the burden on the remaining commoners. At the same time, the success of middle-class buyers in acquiring estates and titles

[11] See below, pp. 357–64.
[12] Merriman, *The Rise of the Spanish Empire*, iv. 441.
[13] See above, pp. 50–51.

aggravated class distinctions and further increased the gulf between the aristocracy and the mass of the people.

In Spain a middle class hardly existed. There was, it is true, a merchant class in Castile, for even Spaniards were not averse to acquiring wealth. The merchants of Burgos and Medina del Campo had long been enriched by the wool trade, while the wealth of the Indies made the fortunes of many Spanish as well as foreign merchant houses; and while the Spanish creditors of the state were in a minority, they were by no means absent, for the Benaventes, the Encinas, the Haros and the Lermas often appeared in the contracts signed with the Council of Finance.[14] For these reasons the traditional opinion that Spaniards had little aptitude for commerce needs to be modified. On the other hand large-scale commercial operations could hardly be expected in a country insufficiently urbanised and among a people lacking the traditions of business enterprise. Indeed, the notable exceptions ended by proving the rule. Simón Ruiz, for example, was a successful and enterprising businessman.[15] At Medina del Campo he operated at the centre of commercial affairs, corresponding ceaselessly with the greatest merchants of Lisbon, Antwerp, Lyons, and Genoa, and he was well known in the entourage of Philip II. Beginning from about 1550 as an importer of Breton linens, he gradually extended his operations and acquired sufficient capital to speculate—with enormous success—on the exchange; by 1576 he was lending money to Philip II and was participating in numerous *asientos* for the payment of the army in Flanders, either furnishing the capital himself or working for a commission. From his considerable fortune he spent large sums on poor relief, including the endowment of a hospital at Medina del Campo, a sign that charity was not dead in sixteenth-century Spain. Merchants like Ruiz, however, were a small minority: there were about twenty Genoese houses comparable to his, and only five or six that could be classified as genuinely Castilian. Moreover, there was a lack of staying power in Spanish firms, which can be seen in the career of the Ruiz family itself; the second generation dissipated the wealth created by the first and sought to abandon business for nobility. There were, it is true, economic factors operating against Spanish businessmen in the sixteenth century. The favourable conditions after the influx of precious metals and the opening of the American market gave new opportunities to Spanish industrialists and merchants, but these did not last long beyond 1550. The stimulus created by rising prices and colonial markets then turned to a disadvantage as it drew more and more foreign manufacturers and merchants into the colonial

[14] H. Lapeyre, *Une famille de marchands: les Ruiz. Contribution a l'étude du commerce entre la France et l'Espagne au temps de Philippe II* (Paris, 1955), 118–21.
[15] *Ibid.*, 46–47, 60–73, 95–103, 597–98.

trade. In spite of her attempts to monopolise the American market, Castile could not resist the pressure of foreign competition; other European countries, less affected by the price rise than Spain, could produce cheaper goods, against which Castilian manufacturers were unable to compete and to which they eventually lost the colonial market, But while this might explain the demise of Spanish manufacturers, it hardly accounts for the retreat of Spanish merchants, for foreigners in Spain, such as the Genoese, were operating successfully in similar conditions, and many Seville merchants managed to survive by acting as commission agents for foreign manufacturers.

There was, in fact, a further reason for the absence of a middle class in Spain—a social prejudice against trade and towards nobility which found expression in the conviction 'que el no vivir de rentas, no es trato de nobles'. The odium attached to manual work and to business—*el deshonor de trabajo*, in the contemporary phrase—operated against the emergence of a middle class from the very beginning, for merchants aspired to leave trade and invest their money in a landed title. In view of the aristocratic structure of Spanish society and the security of land as an investment, this was a natural tendency and not merely the result of empty vanity, for it was clear to everyone that the noble had all the advantages—honours, exemption from taxation, and a territorial wealth which was infinitely more secure than commerce.[16] Consequently, the ambition of most of those who had made their wealth in business, especially the second generation of a family firm, was to abandon the merchant class, which was only regarded as an intermediary stage in the social hierarchy, and live as gentlemen.

The mania for aristocratic status need not have been damaging to Spanish society and economy if the newly ennobled, like those of the English gentry who came from merchant backgrounds, had remained faithful to business. But it produced a contempt for trade and restless anxiety to join the aristocracy which were ruinous for Spain and her people. According to the theologian Bartolomé Albornoz, 'no one wishes to inherit the profession of his father' in the country which only esteemed 'arms and letters'.[17] Merchants, he argued, did not appreciate the qualities of the state to which God had called them, nor the imperfections of that to which they aspired: 'ravian y mueren por la caballería'. The starving *hidalgo* of Lazarillo de Tormes was, indeed, a symbol of a real situation. It was not surprising, therefore, that a whole sector of Spanish life was colonised by Italians who

[16] This is the process which Braudel calls 'la trahison de la bourgeoisie', *op. cit.*, 619–24.
[17] *Arte de los contractos*, 1573, quoted in Lapeyre, *op. cit.*, pp. 117–18; see also Carande, *op. cit.*, i. 102–104.

were not paralysed by aristocratic prejudice and who had, in any case, the advantage of superior techniques acquired over many centuries of large-scale commerce. The predominance of Italians and their enrichment at the expense of the state caused alarm and resentment, and the unpopularity of the Genoese, those 'anticristianos de las monedas de España' as Quevedo called them, was notorious. But the Spanish crown and its people could hardly have managed without the Grimaldis, Dorias, Spinolas, Lamellinis, and others, who virtually monopolised trade and assisted the monarchy with enormous loans.

In a society where standards were set by the landed aristocracy there were few prospects for labourers and artisans. The Spanish working class of the sixteenth century, confronted by a prosperous nobility whose estate was a magnet for manufacturers and merchants, had visible evidence for the view that work was degrading. In the absence of an identifiable middle class, possible entry to which might have acted as a stimulus, the tenant and the craftsman lost confidence in work as a means of progress. They worked because there was no alternative, or because the alternative was hunger. The notion that the typical Castilian was the idle *hidalgo*, too proud to work, is a myth that would hardly need contradicting were it not repeated so often. Except in the extreme north, in Asturias, *hidalgos* formed a minority of the population; the Basques believed they were all nobles, but that did not prevent them cultivating the land and building ships. The further inference—that in Spain only the moriscos worked—is equally false, for there were hundreds of thousands of hard-working peasants and the extensive public and private building that was done in the sixteenth century could only have been performed by an army of artisans. Indeed for a miserable subsistence, which barely covered vital provisions, they had to work hard indeed. A contemporary report of the tavern-keepers of Barcelona recorded that the workers of the city ate a midday meal consisting of a piece of bread and garlic.[18] If by any chance the worker had a surplus from his wages, heavier and heavier taxation took it from him. But usually he had little to start with. Peasants and tenant farmers found the pressure on them growing daily as exploiting landlords intensified their production or raised their rents. In the first half of the century, when industry appeared to be flourishing, the peasants tried to find a way of escape from the destitution of the countryside by flocking to the cities in search of work. But once this brief boom had passed and the middle classes were beginning their exodus from trade and industry, there was nothing in the cities for them either, so the number of unemployed increased, wandering from one monastery to another in search of free soup. In these conditions the only

[18] Vicens Vives, *Apuntes del curso de Historia Económica de España*, i. 297–98.

solutions open to them were to enrol in the army, to enter the religious orders, or to resign themselves to a life on the margin of society. The inarticulate masses of the sixteenth century had few spokesmen, but the hordes of vagabonds, beggars and unemployed who infested the roads of Spain, especially those leading to the court, were eloquent testimony of the increase of destitution in a society where the aristocracy monopolised the ownership of land.

This was the situation in Castile. In eastern Spain poverty had a different origin. The pressure of population on a mountainous region which could not sustain it forced highlanders in the Catalan Pyrenees to descend towards the neighbouring plains of Ampurdan and Lérida.[19] But in their search for a living on the land or pasture for their herds they came up against the Catalan peasants who were already in possession, often sustained by wealthy speculators in Barcelona. Unable to find a living either in the mountains from which they came or in the plains to which they were drawn, they became outlaws and lived by contraband or brigandage; highland raiders, in search of loot, terrorised the lowland villages and lay in wait to rob travellers and couriers in a frontier district where the king's writ hardly ran yet near which passed one of the vital routes of imperial Spain, linking her to Italy via Barcelona. But Aragonese and Catalan adventurers were to be found in all parts of Spain and the empire and they were drawn to any war. In 1570, during the war of Granada, they flocked in hundreds to the camp of Don John of Austria; and Philip II himself raised a *tercio* from Catalan brigands for the war in Flanders. Their homeland, moreover, was adjacent to France and presented a political and religious problem which took many years to liquidate.[20]

Spanish society in the sixteenth century was permeated at every level by the church.[21] The religious estate comprised about 100,000 members in the sixteenth century and was said to take half the national income. In spite of their privileges and wealth, however, the Spanish clergy could hardly be considered as a separate social class. The vocation and the composition of the church transcended class distinctions: its ranks included sons of artisans and peasants as well as representatives of the gentry and nobility, while its mission was shared by aristocrats like St. Teresa of Avila and commoners like St. John of the Cross. Yet it would be surprising if the church did not reflect in some degree the aristocratic structure of Spanish society. With rare exceptions, the most important dioceses, as well as the best benefices, were in the hands of men from aristocratic families; a tendency which was due not only to social prejudice and influence but also to

[19] On Catalan brigandage see the brilliant passages in Braudel, *op. cit.*, 46–48, 648–59.
[20] See below, pp. 210–17.
[21] See also below, pp. 251–86.

the fact that until the decrees of the Council of Trent became effective seminaries were not provided for the education of priests, and thus candidates of humble origin found their uncultured backgrounds a liability in the process of preferment. Moreover, the church owned a disproportionate amount of the country's wealth and shared the aristocratic monopoly of land. The cortes protested frequently but in vain at the accumulation of property in mortmain and criticised it as one of the causes of the economic distress of the country. But the church absorbed manpower as well as land. In the last decades of the sixteenth century when economic pressures on most sectors of Spanish society were increasing, the security offered by the church and its income helped to swell the ranks of the clergy as destitute families put their sons into the priesthood and the younger sons of the nobility competed even more intensely for the better benefices.

Nevertheless, although the clergy were just as zealous as the nobility for their privileges, immunities, and wealth, they had different ideas about their use. In the first place, the religious revival associated with the Counter-Reformation included a renewed emphasis on charity, and many of the resources of the Spanish church were directed towards the relief of the poor and the maintenance of hospitals, which rendered it a welfare as well as a religious organisation. Secondly, the higher clergy identified themselves completely with the policy of the state, especially in the reign of Philip II. The church provided the crown not only with useful administrators but also with many financial subsidies, which compensated to some degree for the clergy's partial exemption from ordinary taxation. Therefore, the crown's interest in the church inevitably extended to appointments to benefices, for it wanted a hierarchy distinguished not only for its piety and learning but also for its readiness to co-operate with the state. In some cases immense wealth was at stake. The see of Toledo, for example, was the richest in Christendom outside Rome. Its incumbent during much of Philip II's reign was Gaspar de Quiroga, who was a fervent supporter of the king's foreign policy.[22] In 1586 he made the king a grant of 200,000 ducats to be spent entirely on the war against England. Again, in February 1588, he donated 100,000 ducats for the Spanish Armada. After its defeat he sent another 100,000 ducats and gave generously towards shipbuilding in 1589 and 1594. Moreover, grants of this kind were independent of the regular revenue which the royal treasury received from the church and which gave the crown a vested interest in supporting the extension of ecclesiastical property.

The wealth of the church, however, was unequally distributed between

[22] M. Boyd, *Cardinal Quiroga, Inquisitor General of Spain* (Dubuque, 1954).

the higher and the lower clergy, who were already separated, as has been seen, by differences of background and culture. In spite of the vast revenues of most of the Spanish dioceses, the lower clergy were often destitute and their social position was more akin to the underprivileged outside their ranks than to their aristocratic superiors. In social conflicts in Catalonia the Dominicans and Franciscans aligned themselves with the common people against the nobility, while the latter could usually count on the support of the Benedictines who were themselves great landowners. Indeed, in view of the different social attitudes of the clergy in Spain and of their frequent clashes over race relations and missionary methods in the Spanish colonies, the Spanish church of the sixteenth century was much less monolithic than it often appears. And in a society rigidly divided into classes, it was the only institution that bridged the gulf between rich and poor and took its message to all Spaniards, regardless of their social position.

2. Agriculture and Industry

Agrarian conditions in Spain were not the same in every region: the prospects of the Catalan peasant, with his relative security of tenure, were much brighter than those of the landless labourer of Castile, and in a country made up of local economic units, isolated from each other and often living on a subsistence agriculture, conditions could vary almost from one village to the next. Nevertheless, the dominant feature of the agrarian régime in Spain was the existence of vast latifundia, held in rigid entail and mortmain and worked by a rural proletariat.[23] This not only withdrew large tracts of land from circulation and prevented investment and improvement, but also had pernicious social effects. In Castile the peasant rarely owned the land he worked, and if he was fortunate enough to have a tenancy it was usually insecure, expensive, and burdened with debt; in order to buy supplies and meet his obligations he often had to sell his produce long before harvest at very low prices.

Yet the rise in agricultural prices in the sixteenth century and the consequent increase in revenue from the land sometimes and in some places made agriculture a lucrative business which occupied not only farmers and labourers but also investors. The new interest was seen in the cultivation of new lands and in the more extensive exploitation of land already under cultivation, for both of which capital had to be assembled. This was often done by farmers borrowing money and paying an annual interest, which was secured by a mortgage on his farm. In this way, land was turned into

[23] There are few modern works on the agrarian history of Spain. See C. Viñas Mey, *El problema de la tierra en la España de los siglos XVI–XVII* (Madrid, 1941).

an object of speculation. The extremely high rates of interest involved—sometimes as much as 50 per cent.—encouraged capitalists to engage in agricultural loans; these included not only the wealthy, such as nobles and religious communities, but also smaller people with modest amounts of capital. In other words this was yet another process converting owners of capital in Spain into a parasite class living on rents and interest from investments in land rather than on industrial or commercial enterprises. The comment of a seventeenth-century *arbitrista*, Manuel Caxa de Leruela, indicates that the system was well known at the time: 'As people saw that you gave two thousand ducats and received each year two hundred, and that after six or seven years the two thousand were recovered, it was obviously an interesting kind of loan'. By the end of the sixteenth century a vast amount of capital was invested in agricultural *censos*. To the farmers themselves such investments were a mixed blessing. For a time, under favourable conditions of price and demand, the supply of capital assisted the development of agriculture, and the higher yield of the land allowed the peasant to meet his payments to the owner of the mortgage. But whenever agricultural prices dropped, even temporarily, the farmer found himself without enough money to pay the interest. The mortgage was then surrendered, causing a transfer of property which increased the concentration of land in the hands of a few *latifundistas*, and drove more people from the country to swell the ranks of unemployed in the towns. At the same time, the divorce between capital and labour helps to explain the technical poverty of Spanish agriculture and the apparent contradiction between an underpopulated countryside and the cultivation of new lands. To improve agricultural production uncultivated land on the plains and in the hills was brought into use by drainage or irrigation, while the countryside surrounding many towns like Valladolid, Toledo, and Madrid was converted, often with the help of the local authorities and sometimes of the crown, into fertile fields and gardens. Some of the reclamations, however, consisted of inferior land, and although the first crops were remunerative and there was an initial increase in production, this was followed by a gradual decline in the quality of the product and a drop in the yield per unit of land in general. In other words, the extension of the area cultivated was the means adopted by the poor farmers of Castile to obtain what is better achieved by the adoption of improved techniques.[24] Moreover, as will be seen, the extension of arable agriculture was small indeed compared to the effort and the territory assigned to pasture farming.

Andalucía, nestling under the prosperity of Seville, was an exception to the situation in Castile in general. From capital made in the Indies trade

[24] Vicens Vives, *Apuntes del curso de Historia Económica de España*, i. 300–01.

and with the incentive of high prices on the American market, investments were made not merely in the form of loans but directly in production.[25] The cultivation of the vine and the olive—a sign of capitalist agriculture—was extending over the whole basin of the Guadalquivir, to whose ports ships from northern Europe came to seek not only the wool of Castile and the products of the Indies but also the oil and wine of the fertile plain of Andalucía. Other parts of Spain were also capable of responding to a market demand. Although industrial crops like flax and hemp were neglected, the production of raw silk flourished in Granada and Valencia, while saffron, which was used in cooking and dyeing, was produced in great quantity in Aragon and competed in the European market with the product of Languedoc and Provence.[26]

The most important item of agricultural production, however, was grain, for bread was the principal food of Spaniards in the sixteenth century.[27] Old Castile produced the greatest volume of cereals and in good years had a surplus for export. During the course of the sixteenth century, however, the good years became less frequent and Spain experienced a real crisis of production, with increasing dependence on foreign imports. Even in Castile adverse weather conditions could reduce crops to famine level; Aragon produced enough only for its own needs, while Catalonia and the Basque country had to supply their own deficiencies with foreign imports. In this important commodity, therefore, the state employed a policy of price control: in times of shortage prices would tend to rise, so a ceiling price was fixed by the government. The years after 1502 were a period of bad harvests, so the ceiling price, already introduced by the Catholic Monarchs, was continued. The period from 1512 to 1539 was relatively productive—though there was famine in Castile in 1521 and a serious drought in Andalucía in 1525—so the ceiling price was lifted. From 1539, however, a series of poor crops caused a return to a policy of price control, and in the second half of the century this was the normal system, for the growing distress of the rural population reacted unfavourably on grain production, as can be seen perhaps in the constant rise of agricultural prices. The problem of grain supplies occupied a large part of the correspondence of Philip II, for these were needed not only for the civilian population but also for troops and sailors in their campaigns abroad. The system of ceiling prices was the government's way of protecting the consumer—including itself—against the producer. For the farmer, however, there was no assistance, though in

[25] Viñas Mey, *op. cit.*, 16–20.

[26] Lapeyre, *op. cit.*, 589.

[27] E. Rodríguez y Ibarra, *El problema cerealista en España durante el reinado de los Reyes Católicos* (Madrid, 1944). On grain supplies in the western Mediterranean see Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 277–84, 447–64.

practice the policy of price control often broke down. In any case, the anxiety of the state for the provision of its armed forces often conflicted with the interests of the towns who were determined to feed their own populations and thus to preserve the supplies of their own countryside; in 1582, for example, Bilbao protected its supply in the plain of Burgos against the great government requisitions which were becoming more and more pressing.

Spain, it is true, possessed sources of grain outside the Peninsula. Milan and Naples occasionally produced enough for export, and Sicily was one of the biggest granaries in the western Mediterranean, which Spain preserved by a policy of taxing foreign buyers and restricting permits for purchase. But the Turkish advance across the eastern Mediterranean and control of grain supplies there increased the strain on western sources, especially in time of war; without the corn of Sicily, provided by Philip II on cheap terms, Venice could never have survived the war culminating in Lepanto. Moreover, Sicily itself, for reasons which are still obscure, was drying up, and there was a noticeable decline it its grain exports in the period 1532–78.[28] It was in these circumstances that the Mediterranean was opened to grain from northern Europe in the second half of the sixteenth century; English and Dutch shippers broke into the Mediterranean trade primarily as carriers of grain from the Baltic; and even while she was fighting her rebel subjects in the Low Countries Spain depended on Dutch imports of vital grain supplies to remedy her own deficiencies.

The acute shortage of cereals in Spain can be attributed to two basic conditions in her economic life. As the population was increasing, so there were more mouths to feed, and domestic production could not keep pace with the growing demand. This failure was due, in turn, to the neglect of arable resources in favour of pasture farming.

The predominance of stock-farming in the Castilian economy and its preference to agriculture had already been made explicit by the Catholic Monarchs, who declared their conviction that 'the breeding and preservation of livestock ought to be the principal substance of these kingdoms'.[29] This was also the policy of the first Habsburgs whose interests coincided with those of the Castilian aristocracy. As pasture farming demanded less labour, its extension at the expense of agriculture released men for recruitment into the armies constantly required by their foreign policy, while the nobles saw that the easiest and most profitable use to which they could put their land was to turn it into sheep runs. Yet sheep farming was a response to

[28] Braudel, *op. cit.*, 466–67.

[29] J. Klein, *The Mesta. A Study in Spanish economic history, 1273–1836* (Cambridge, Mass., 1920).

natural conditions as well as to official support. The dry climate of the Meseta of Castile and the poverty of its soil were hardly suitable for arable agriculture, but admirably adapted for the rearing of sheep. Moreover, the contrasts of temperature between the sierras and the southern plains had, from time immemorial favoured migration of flocks. Towards October the herds of sheep left the mountains and high plateaux of Old Castile to winter in Extremadura, Andalucía and the region of Murcia, returning north from the beginning of April. In their travellings they followed the routes which had been reserved to them, known as the *cañadas*, at certain points of which they were obliged to pass royal agents who collected the tax called *servicio y montazgo*. Since the thirteenth century the sheep breeders had been organised in a powerful corporation, the Mesta, which organised their affairs and defended their privileges. In Castile grazing rights were superior to all other land rights, and the crown usually defended the sheep-owners in their conflicts with the farmers, upon whose lands the sheep encroached. From early in the sixteenth century the privileged position of the Mesta was directly related to the incessant demands for subsidies made on it by Charles V, especially from 1525 when the ratification of its prerogatives converted the assistance it gave to the crown into a species of open and permanent credit.

In the second half of the century, however, the blow delivered to Spanish exports by the price revolution also hit the Mesta. Sheltered by royal support, sheep-farming had been good business while the wool it produced could be exported without difficulty. But the steep rise of Spanish prices beyond those of the rest of Europe after 1550 diminished the sale of wool and with it the herds of sheep. In little over ten years, between 1552 and 1563, the total number of sheep declined by 20 per cent.[30] While it was incapable of maintaining its own progress, sheep farming also had a harmful effect on the rest of the Spanish economy. This was felt above all by agriculture, for farmers lived in constant dread of the yearly migrations of the herds, which overflowed from their legal passage, damaging crops and causing soil erosion, and producing a continuous struggle between farmers and shepherds over encroachments. And while the Mesta had the right to pasture its flocks on waste land, town land and even town commons, it effectively prevented the enclosure of common land for arable agriculture. But industry also felt the impact of Mesta privilege: while the sheep breeders wanted to export the maximum amount of wool, the cloth manufacturers were anxious to retain the quota they needed for domestic industry. In the fifteenth century the latter had obtained the right to buy one-third of the wool produced; during the reign of Charles V, coinciding with increased

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 27; Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 228–29.

industrial output in Spain, they tried to increase their quota to one-half, and their failure was yet further proof of the state protection given to the Mesta.

In the disputes between the Mesta and industrialists, the methods employed by both sides reflected the organisation of the Spanish economy in general and of Spanish industry in particular. There was an extraordinary development of craft gilds in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and their over-regulated and antiquated methods dominated manufacturing processes. Far from showing concern for methods of production, training and technique, they were more concerned with trying to remove competition, both regional and foreign.

Yet under the stimulus of the price revolution and the American market Castilian industry made some progress in the sixteenth century. The abundance of wool placed the textile industry in a position to exploit the new conditions, and the production centres of Barcelona, Valencia, Segovia, and Toledo increased their output. The boom, however, did not last long beyond the middle of the sixteenth century, nor did the level of production ever reach that of England, the Low Countries, and Italy; in fact the time came when it could not even supply the domestic market. One reason for this was the traditional and facile orientation of the Castilian economy towards the rearing of sheep and the export of raw wool. A further cause was the protection given by Charles V to Flemish manufacturers. Yet the industry itself was strangled by over-regulation, which tended to remove decision and initiative from the producer. In contrast to this was the slight concern shown for the instruction of weavers and the improvement of technique, with the result that Castilian textiles lost the market not only because they were dearer than those of foreign competitors but also because they were inferior in quality.

In contrast with the development of the cloth industry, modest as it was, the production of yarn and spun flax was low; hemp was cultivated in Aragon and Valencia, but not enough was manufactured for the needs of the Spanish navy. On the other hand the production of silk and silk goods made some progress and their export eventually outstripped that of cloth. The industry had a Moorish tradition and the silk itself was produced in Valencia, Murcia, and Granada.[31] In spite of the fact that much of it was exported in a raw state, especially to Italy and France, whose products then competed with those of Spanish looms, the manufactured article also had a market abroad. Another industry in which the Moors had specialised was leather, and this was given an added impetus in the sixteenth century when

[31] F. Bejarano Robles, *La industria de la seda en Málaga durante el siglo XVI* (Madrid, 1951).

the famous hides of the Spanish Indies provided the raw material on advantageous terms. Ornamental leather goods, jackets, and above all the gloves of Ocaña and Cuidad Real, scented with musk or amber, were sold in the principal centres of Europe.

While Castile specialised in wool, the economy of Biscay rested on iron.[32] Easy access to foreign markets through the port of Bilbao was an important asset to the industrial potential of the region; foreign vessels came to load great quantities of iron, bringing in exchange foodstuffs which the mountainous interior did not produce for itself. Although some of the ore was exported abroad, however, it was obviously more profitable for the Basque provinces to work it in their own forges first. A large portion of the metal was, in fact, used in domestic production of nails, agricultural tools, anchors and arms. Estimates of the number of forges, mainly in Guipúzcoa, in the sixteenth century vary between eighty and three hundred, but whatever the number the technique of metallurgy had certainly advanced. At the beginning of the century the use of water-power caused a minor industrial revolution.[33] The old methods, which involved enormous expenditure of wood and human energy, were gradually abandoned in favour of more efficient ones. On most of the coastal rivers forges, called *masuqueras*, were established: hydraulic wheels motivated huge bellows which maintained the furnaces, while others worked powerful hammers to forge and stretch the iron and steel. And in addition to the revenues which they brought to the proprietors and lessees, the forges gave a livelihood to a large working population—muleteers, carters, timber workers, and even producers of cider, large quantities of which were consumed by the ironworkers.

The Biscayan coast was productive not only in metallurgy but also in ships. Unlike the Catalan shipyards, which lacked the stimulus of an active trade and whose local timber supplies were of inferior quality, those of the Basque country had a good supply of local timber and iron and were favourably situated on the trade route between Castile and the Low Countries, where Biscayan-built ships were to be found in large numbers. Yet in spite of their situation on the Atlantic coast and the needs of the Spanish empire the Biscayan shipyards did not take the initiative in the development of new types of ships beyond those known in the Mediterranean.[34] Basically the galleon was a modified merchantman armed with cannon, and although both were used extensively on the Atlantic crossing

[32] See T. Guiard Larrauri, *Historia del Consulado y Casa de Contratación de Bilbao y del comercio de la villa (1511–1880)*, (2 vols., Bilbao, 1913–14).

[33] Lapeyre, *op. cit.*, p. 588.

[34] A. P. Usher, 'Spanish ships and shipping in the 16th and 17th centuries', in *Facts and Factors in Economic History. Essays presented to Edward Francis Gay* (Cambridge, Mass., 1932), 189–90.

they were simply variations of types already common to the Mediterranean and of Venetian origin; the caravel, on the other hand, was developed by the Portuguese. But what they lacked in originality of design and, compared to the Dutch, in technical progress, the Spanish shipyards made up in the volume of tonnage they produced. During the greater part of the reign of Philip II production on the northern coast of Spain was stretched to its limit.[35] How much was due to royal and how much to private initiative is difficult to determine. The profits to be earned in the Indies trade made shipping a good investment and in the sixteenth century most of the ships employed in the Atlantic crossing were built in Basque shipyards. But the demands of war, especially in the 1580's, were also one of the factors giving added stimulus to Spanish shipbuilding. In 1583 there were 15,000 *toneladas* of shipping under construction in Biscay, and in the next three years fifty vessels were ordered on the royal account. The defeat of the Spanish Armada did not bring mercantile activity to a halt, but brought further employment to local shipyards in an effort to replace the losses suffered. The pressure of the state, however, sacrificed genuine merchant vessels to big ships which were only useful in wartime.[36] The vessels most useful in European trade were small ones, capable of reaching inland ports, like Bilbao and Seville, and operating economically with modest cargoes on frequent and regular voyages. Philip II, on the other hand, tried to force shipowners to build large vessels because of their military value, and although this was not necessarily in the interests of civilian shippers it was a tradition which dated from the navigation acts of the Catholic Monarchs who not only prohibited the shipment of Spanish merchandise in non-Spanish ships when native vessels were available but also introduced subsidies for the construction of larger vessels. A report dating from the end of Philip II's reign explained the naval decline of Spain, already apparent at that date, in terms of the measures taken in favour of heavy shipping which remained subsequently inactive and ruined the shipowners and their seamen; the author contrasted the complete liberty prevailing in other maritime nations and concluded that 'all the naval power of the northern countries has had its origin in our ruin'.[37] But this was only a partial view: on the most important Spanish trade route—the Indies—big ships were not only needed but commercially profitable, as can be seen by the heavy civilian orders placed in Basque shipyards for this type of vessel, predating the naval programme of Philip II. Spanish shipping and shipbuilding, in fact,

[35] T. Guiard Larrauri, *La industria naval vizcaína* (Bilbao, 1917), pp. 53, 64–72.
[36] Lapeyre, *op. cit.*, 212–14.
[37] C. Fernández Duro, *Armada española desde la unión de los reinos de Castilla y de Aragón* (9 vols., Madrid, 1895–1903), ii. 443–48.

were the victim of many circumstances. The high costs of materials and labour, due partly to the price revolution, compared unfavourably with those of shipyards in northern Europe; in any case the naval supplies of the Basque interior eventually proved insufficient and imports from Scandinavia —highly vulnerable during the war with England and the Dutch—raised the cost of Spanish-built ships still further. State requisitions were another blow to the industry. In the sixteenth century there was not a rigid distinction between the royal navy and the merchant marine, and Philip II continued the traditional system of *asiento*, *flete y embargo*, by which the state contracted with private shipowners to hire or requisition merchant vessels in time of emergency; in this case, the difficulty of securing repayment and compensation for deterioration or damage, especially after a disastrous campaign like that of the Spanish Armada, deterred shipowners from investing in further building programmes. Meanwhile, the technical stagnation inherent in the industry prevented any improvement of its ships which might have revived the flagging demand, and thus during the last two decades of the sixteenth century the Basque country was undergoing an industrial decline that had already begun in Castile.

Indeed, the existence of textile, silk, leather, metallurgical and shipbuilding industries in Spain and the growth of population in many urban centres, cannot disguise the fact that Spanish industrial enterprise in the sixteenth century was weak and growing rapidly weaker, and there was nothing comparable to the minor industrial revolution then beginning in England. This decline is easier to describe than to explain. Castilian industry in general was technologically less advanced than that of northern Europe and its products were less competitive in quality. Industrial progress can hardly be made without efficient organisation; Spanish manufacturers showed little aptitude for management and were in any case hampered by the restrictive regulations of the gilds. The state itself did little to encourage productive activities or investment in productive enterprises. Industry needs capital, and this must be earned—usually by foreign trade. Spain had an adverse balance of trade in Europe, and like most countries whose basic exports are raw materials which do not cover the costs of foreign purchases she had to pay for vital imports in cash.[38] In the New World, on the other hand, Spain acquired immense wealth. But this was not productively invested. On the contrary, American treasure—the one source of surplus wealth she undoubtedly possessed—was squandered in foreign wars, or used to defray the adverse balance of trade with foreign countries, or lavished on grandiose building and luxury goods. Spain's industrial difficulties, however, can be attributed above all to the price revolution and the burden of taxation.

[38] See below, pp. 148–55.

Inflation, which was at first a stimulus to Spanish manufactures, ended by pricing them out of the international and even out of the domestic market. In the mid-sixteenth century the price inflation and the increase in the cost of essential goods—although understood by some Spanish theorists—were attributed by the authorities not to the influx of treasure and insufficient production, but to over-export and excessive demand, especially from America. In 1548 the cortes of Castile demanded the application of a radical solution—a prohibition of exports, even to the Indies, and encouragement to the import of foreign goods. The crown refused to prohibit exports to the Indies but decreed that foreign cloth could be imported and sold in Spain. Then by an edict of 25 May 1552 it ordered a virtual prohibition of the export of goods made from wool, silk, and leather, except to the Indies. By another edict of 23 April 1552 it tried to stimulate the entry of foreign linen and cloth by ordering these textiles to be imported to the same value as the wool exported. Even allowing for the usual evasion, these edicts were as harmful as they were inept, a fact which was recognised by the cortes themselves when, under pressure from merchants who had suffered from foreign competition, they admitted in 1555 that the prohibitions had caused a depression and unemployment and requested a return to the export of textiles and the dropping of the obligatory returns policy. In 1558 the latter was, in fact, removed and export of cloth to Portugal allowed. But the prohibitions on the export of silk and hides, both raw material and manufactures, remained in operation, though from 1567 certain articles were excepted. Meanwhile, the mid-century crisis of the Castilian economy, wrongly diagnosed and treated as usual with an eye to the consumer rather than the producer, had given foreign importers immense opportunities at the expense of Spanish industry and commerce.[39] From then on they were fighting a losing battle with foreign competition, and although Segovian cloths managed to stay in the market in some substance, by the 1590's Castilian industry was near the brink of bankruptcy.

Inflation, however, was not the only enemy. Heavy taxation both raised the cost of Spanish manufactures and deterred businessmen in Castile from investing in enterprises that were the target of the state's financial policy when they could invest their capital in land and an aristocratic way of life and thus escape the main burden of taxation. Industry was hit not only by export duties but also by the *millones* and the alcabala, the two great indirect taxes of the time. The latter was a sales tax which added to the price of an article almost every time it changed hands and was one of the main grievances of all industrial interests. From 1575, when the curve of the tax

[39] See J. Larraz, *La época del mercantilismo en Castilla, 1500–1700* (2nd edn., Madrid, 1944), pp. 50–57.

index rises considerably above that of the general price index, the royal treasury increased the pressure of taxation still further, both to compensate itself for the decline in the purchasing power of money and to meet the rising cost of war, and thus placed an intolerable burden on the already weakened remnants of Spanish industry. The rising demands of the state, therefore, played their part in the ruin of productive enterprises in Spain. Foreign commitments drained her capital resources, and this affected not only government revenue but also private capital which was diminished by taxation and by the frequent expropriations of revenue from the Indies.

3. American Treasure and the Price Revolution

Before the arrival of American treasure in the sixteenth century, European trade was fed primarily by gold from the Sudan. But Portuguese expeditions along the Atlantic coast of Africa to the Gulf of Guinea between 1460 and 1470, and the establishment of direct trade relations between Portugal and the East Indies at the beginning of the sixteenth century, diverted the route of Sudanese gold away from the Mediterranean and caused a great scarcity of gold in Europe. This was supplied in part by the German silver mines, which enjoyed a period of relative prosperity between 1470 and 1530, coinciding with the shortage of precious metals. From 1530, however, this shortage was unexpectedly eased when American treasure began to replace the old sources of supply and gave Europe an immense stock of money, the origin of grave alteration in prices, especially in Spain, the country where the treasure arrived and from which it was distributed.

The influx of treasure consisted almost entirely of silver. Up to 1550, it is true, imports were mixed, but American gold was never sufficient, even in the best years, to produce an appreciable effect on prices, and after 1550 it was relatively insignificant. Silver receipts, however, expanded enormously.[40] They began most effectively about 1530, and remained at a relatively modest, though steadily rising, level until 1550. From then the galleons began to import silver in vast quantities, which became vaster still from 1580 and caused a profound revolution in prices. Behind the flood of silver lay a technical revolution in America itself. The new method of amalgamation devised in Germany and consisting of the treatment of silver with mercury was introduced in the mines of New Spain by Bartolomé de Medina in 1557. From 1571 it was applied to the Potosí deposits in Upper Peru.[41] This process increased the exports of treasure tenfold, and they reached their peak in the period 1580 to 1630, the great age of Spanish imperialism. 'The king has reason to say', wrote one of Philip II's

[40] See Appendix II, Table A.

[41] See below, pp. 169–71.

secretaries, 'that the emperor never disposed of as much money as himself for his enterprises'.[42]

The interest of the state in precious metals derived not merely from mercantilist prejudices but from their ability to buy what it most needed—the means of power. Spain was already a protectionist country, barricaded with customs, and a government which theoretically controlled everything entering and leaving its frontiers was unlikely to allow the new-found treasure to escape its grasp. But the monopoly, and the attempts to preserve it, were not perfect: there were frequent complaints from the cortes that the continual exit of precious metals—'as if we were Indians'—was impoverishing the country, and it was commonly said that Spain was 'the Indies of other countries'. Yet there were many reasons why the precious metals should escape from Spain and circulate abroad. Spain was primarily an exporter of raw materials and an importer of manufactured goods; with an unfavourable trade balance, she had to settle her payments with ready cash. This accounted for much unlicensed export of specie by Spanish merchants or by foreign merchants resident in Spain, all of which made its way to the great production centres of Europe. In a sense the precious metals were the crutches which enabled the Spanish economy to move. But alongside clandestine export, the state had to authorise some foreign payments in specie, for imports of vital food supplies and naval stores had to be bought with cash. The greatest remittances of all, however, were made by the crown itself in order to pay for its overseas commitments. Instead of investing their money in productive enterprises at home, as the Fuggers did at Augsburg with the money from their mines at Schwaz, the Spanish Habsburgs lavished more and more on foreign enterprises, the price not merely of ambition but of the very existence of the Spanish empire and its defence. The routes by which the precious metals left Spain all converged on northern Europe, either directly from Bilbao or via France and Italy, for it was here that Spain's political and military interests were most exposed and her balance of payments was most adverse. The money itself was vital not only in the conflict with France and the war in the Low Countries but also in the economy of northern Europe, for from Antwerp it made its way to Germany and England, while the latter also profited from the smuggling of specie by Spanish merchants in wool ships.

[42] Quoted in Merriman, *The Rise of the Spanish Empire*, iv. 438 n. 2. The total registered imports (which does not, of course, allow for smuggling) of public and private treasure between 1503 and 1660 was 447,820,932 pesos, which has been estimated at about £257,488,418. See C. H. Haring, 'American Gold and Silver Production in the first half of the Sixteenth Century', *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, xxix. (1915), 433–79, and Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 35–38. On the routes by which the precious metals left Spain see Braudel, *op. cit.*, 377–98.

In spite of its rapid departure from Spain, however, American treasure had profound effects on the Spanish economy. The 'extremely close correlation between the increase in the volume of treasure imports and the advance of commodity prices throughout the sixteenth century, particularly from 1535', has been so well established that the products of the American mines must be regarded as the principal cause of the price revolution in Spain.[43] The Spanish government, like its neighbours in the rest of Europe, did not understand the causal connection between the influx of precious metals and the rise of prices, and was thus hampered in its economic and financial policies. On the other hand, contemporaries were certainly aware of the price revolution, for it was reflected in the cost of living, and although there was much uncertainty and confusion about its causes, individual economists began to appreciate the rôle of American treasure. Of these the most distinguished was the French theorist, Bodin, who established a connection between treasure imports and inflation in 1568. The views of Bodin, however, had already been anticipated in Spain. Twelve years previously, in 1556, Martín de Azpilcueta Navarro, a canon lawyer, produced the first clear statement known to exist that the high cost of living was a result of treasure imports:

> We see by experience that in France, where money is scarcer than in Spain, bread, wine, cloth, and labour are worth much less. And even in Spain, in times when money was scarcer, saleable goods and labour were given for very much less than after the discovery of the Indies, which

[43] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, p. 301. Hamilton's thesis and the statistical evidence with which he sustains it are unassailable, but criticism of some of his methods and interpretations has been growing; see P. Vilar, 'Problems of the formation of capitalism', *Past and Present*, x. (1956), 15–35; Ingrid Hammarström, 'The "Price Revolution" of the Sixteenth Century. Some Swedish evidence', *The Scandinavian Economic History Review*, v.[2] (1957), 118–154; and especially, J. Nadal, 'La Revolución de los Precios españoles en el siglo XVI. Estado actual de la cuestión', *Hispania*, xix. (1959), 503–29. The criticisms of later commentators can be summarised as follows: 1. Hamilton worked on town prices, but a complete study ought to take account of rural prices, paid in local markets and more closely tied to crop yields. 2. A third of Spain is omitted from his investigation, including Catalonia and the Basque country, both of which perhaps were more closely related to the European economy than the rest of Spain. 3. Not all of the regions can be fitted consistently into his thesis: Valencia, after being in front up to 1530, then drops behind, but takes the lead again from 1581 to 1620. Moreover, although it is true that in general prices rose more quickly in Seville than in Valencia, that does not tell us whether at any given time the cost of living was higher in Seville than in Valencia, or vice versa. 4. His figures for entry of American treasure are defective in that he does not indicate the criterion adopted for separating royal income from private income or include unregistered receipts. 5. His price figures suffer from a defect of origin: they are of uniform provenance—hospitals and charitable establishments. In spite of the criticisms, however, no one has offered to replace Hamilton's work, which remains indispensable.

> flooded the country with gold and silver. The reason for this is that money is worth more where and when it is scarce than where and when it is abundant.[44]

Other Spaniards of the Salamanca school showed similar awareness. The Dominican, Fray Tomás de Mercado, published his *Tratos y contratos de mercaderes y tratantes* in 1569—it was completed by the previous year and owed nothing to Bodin—and although it was full of ethical analysis in the traditional style it also contained some acute economic observation, including the quantity theory of money and the relation between American treasure and the current inflation.

An adequate understanding of the problem, however, had to await modern scholarship. The causal relation between the influx of precious metals and the rise of prices is to be distinguished by regions and by periods. Broadly speaking, the price rise was greatest in Andalucía, which through its monopoly of the Indies trade always received the first impact of treasure imports; this was followed by New Castile, then by Old Castile and León on the one hand and Valencia on the other, corresponding to their distance from the receiving centre. The general price level in Spain slightly more than doubled in the first half of the century. In this period the rise occurred largely in the first, third, and fifth decades. Prices continued to rise in the second half of the century, with plateaux of relative stability in the years 1551-56, 1562-69, and 1584-95; but from 1596 prices soared, reaching their apogee in 1601 with an index number of 143·55 on a 1571-80 base. By 1600 prices had risen to a level four times as high as that of 1501. From 1601 the process was checked, and after a period of oscillations ended in a temporary decline from 1637 to 1642 when there was a drastic drop in remittances from America, but prices never fully descended from the peak attained at the close of the sixteenth century.[45] To this factual description, however, two considerations should be added. First, although prices reached their apogee in the second half of the sixteenth century, the price rise was proportionately greater in the first half of the century. From 1501 to 1550 the advance was 107·61 per cent., while in the last half of the century it was 97·74 per cent. Moreover, the rhythm of acceleration of the price revolution slackened in the middle years of the century. Between 1549 and 1560 prices increased only 11·9 per cent., and the year 1562 marks the transition from a rapid rise (2·8 per cent. half yearly increase) to one more moderate (1·3 per cent.). This mid-century phenomenon can be related to the contemporary depression in the Indies trade (the channel of American treasure) and indicates that the economic depression of the seventeenth century and its relation to the influx of treasure were already foreshadowed at the beginning of Philip II's reign.[46] Secondly, it would be wrong to ascribe the difference between the economic progress of Spain and that of northern Europe uniquely to prices. In general, it is true, the rise of prices was later and less intense in the rest of Europe than in Spain, because of the time required for American treasure to circulate there and the dilution suffered in the process; first France then England felt the impact. But this does not give us a complete picture of the cost of living in these different countries: grain, for example, was always dearer in France than in Spain during the great inflationary period.

Moreover, treasure in itself was not the only cause of the price revolution. The quantity theory of money, by which an increase in the quantity of money in circulation brings a proportionate increase in the level of prices, is too crude to account for all the factors involved in the history of Spanish prices. Prices are also affected by conditions of supply and demand. Industrial and agricultural production, therefore, must also be taken into account. An increase in the amount of money in circulation without a corresponding increase in the production of goods means that the same amount of goods is chasing more and more money, and therefore prices rise. The money pumped into Spain from America was not used to increase domestic productivity, and higher prices were the inevitable result. After an increase in industrial production in the first half of the sixteenth century, though one which did not keep pace with the increase of money, Spanish output then fell off and money sought products abroad. From the side of demand, there were now more people to be fed and clothed and housed. The growth of population enhanced the demand for goods, including foodstuffs. Agricultural producers, like industrial producers, were unable to respond to the rising demand, and new and less fertile lands were cultivated; in this way marginal costs increased, and *per capita* yields became smaller, while demand continued to rise. The pressure of population on food supplies thus increased the price of agricultural produce, and further helped to raise the cost of living.

The consequences of the price revolution are perhaps even more difficult to elucidate than its causes. It certainly caused a general rise in the cost of living, but what this meant for the different classes and for the economic development of the country as a whole is by no means clear. According to the classical explanation, the economic backwardness of Spain

[44] In M. Grice-Hutchinson, *The School of Salamanca. Readings in Spanish Monetary Theory, 1544–1605* (Oxford, 1952), p. 95; see also Larraz, *op. cit.*, pp. 109–131.

[45] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 190–92, 199–203. See Appendix II, Table B.

[46] See below, pp. 169–70; see also Nadal, 'La Revolución de los Precios españoles en el siglo XVI', *op. cit.*, 512.

was related directly to the results of inflation there.[47] The lag of wages behind prices in Europe aided the accumulation of capital; the diminishing price of labour gave entrepreneurs the opportunities of exceptional benefits which could then be further invested. Spain, on the other hand, was claimed as an exception to this general rule, for although there was a lag of wages behind prices it was not enough to afford extraordinary benefits and therefore give great impetus to capitalism. A further refinement of the argument was to note the close correspondence between periods of inflation and deflation of benefits and those of national rise and decline; in these terms the greatness of Spain coincided with the inflation of 1520 to 1600 and its eclipse with the deflation of 1600 to 1630.[48] For there was a close relation between inflation of benefits and accumulation of capital; as wages in Spain were higher than those elsewhere, so there was less opportunity to accumulate capital, and this was the principal reason for Spain's economic inferiority. But these monetary theories leave many questions unanswered. Apart from the fact that inflation of profits does not necessarily imply an industrial boom, there is no ground for arguing that all Spanish wage-earners were better off than their foreign counterparts during the price revolution. From a comparison of the wages of builders in England and France with those in Valencia, it is clear that the latter underwent at least the same progressive losses as the former throughout the sixteenth century.[49] In any case, builder's wages, unaccompanied by those of industrial and agricultural workers, are not representative enough to justify generalisation. It is true that the Spanish inflation did not produce an accumulation of capital for investment. But this was because those who profited from it used their wealth unproductively, either in buying a title and an estate, or in extravagant building, in the purchase of luxury consumer goods, or in simple hoarding.

How, then, did the price revolution affect the various sectors of Spanish society? Conditions in sixteenth-century England support the view that the divorce between constantly rising prices and fixed rents could impoverish the land-owner.[50] But this does not apply to Spain, where rents were not fixed and where the greater power of landowners enabled them to raise rents and replace their tenants by those better able to pay. There is also abundant evidence that in Spain the rich were getting richer and the poor poorer.[51] A possible inference from this is that the opening of the American

[47] E. J. Hamilton, 'American Treasure and the Rise of Capitalism, 1500–1700', *Economica*, ix. (1929), 338–57.
[48] Lord Keynes, *Treatise on Money* (London, 1930), ii. 154–55, 161.
[49] Nadal, 'La Revolución de los Precios españoles en el siglo XVI', *op. cit.*, 523–24.
[50] Hamilton, 'American Treasure and the Rise of Capitalism', *op. cit.*, 350.
[51] Viñas Mey, *El problema de la tierra en la España de los siglos XVI–XVII.*

market and the rise of population in the peninsula itself produced an increase in demand for agricultural products, an extension of cultivation, and a rise in the value of arable land, all of which coincided with the added stimulus of inflation. If, at the same time, the concentration of property in the hands of a few extremely wealthy families is taken into account, together with power to raise rents, then it would seem that the inflationary period was not unfavourable to the great landowners in Spain and did not deter people from investing in land. But landowners were not the only ones to gain from the price revolution. Anyone with something to sell or trade could reap the benefit of inflation, as many manufacturers and merchants did in the first half of the century. When conditions then became more difficult, and constant inflation began to make Spanish enterprise less competitive in the international and colonial markets, only the more powerful merchants were able to survive foreign competition, but those who did so undoubtedly prospered. Enormous fortunes were to be made in the Indies trade, whose expansion was related directly to the rise in prices; when prices rose in Spain there was a strong presumption of an even greater rise in America, and this encouraged further investment and more profitable returns.[52] The latter were distributed beyond the merchant houses of Seville to entrepreneurs in other parts of Spain, for the American market took the oil and wine of Andalucía, the wool of Castile, the metallurgical products and ships of the Basque country. To at least the end of the sixteenth century there was still money to be made in Spain. On the other hand, the price revolution brought impoverishment to those who lived on fixed incomes and small rents, for these did not keep pace with prices. Small landowners of the *hidalgo* class, the lower clergy, government officials and many others all found their standard of living reduced as the price of commodities rose beyond their means. The situation of the peasant is less clear, for it is difficult to reconcile agricultural prosperity and the great rural emigration to the towns, which in turn makes it difficult to explain the alleged extension of cultivation in Spain. But one thing is certain—wages lagged behind prices, and the difference between the two was worse in the first half of the century. Even if the money value of wages subsequently picked up, their purchasing power continued to fall. By 1550 real wages were roughly 20 per cent. lower than the average for 1501–20, and they continued to fall steadily from 1551–60 to 1591–1600, the decrease being now about 12 per cent.[53] Throughout most of the sixteenth century life was difficult for the Spanish poor; indeed, for the mass of

[52] See below, pp. 168–75.
[53] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, p. 280. See Appendix II, Tables C and D.

Spanish wage-earners the price revolution was a grievous blow which reduced their already low standard of living still further.

The crown, on the other hand, like its ally, the aristocracy, was less crippled by these developments than the majority of its subjects. Certainly the cost of administration, and of paying, feeding, and equipping its armed forces, rose for the crown just as the cost of goods did for the private consumer; for war was an industry like any other, and one that was more costly to Spain than to other countries because of her higher level of prices. But as the aristocracy could raise its rents, so the state could increase its revenue; this enabled it to keep up with prices, while inflation alleviated the burden of the loans which formed such a substantial part of its income.

4. The Cost of Government

While the Spanish crown's expenditure in the sixteenth century was immense and increasing, it also had enormous and growing resources. The figures available in contemporary budgets lack precision, but are sufficient to show the general trend. The revenues of Charles V tripled during his reign.[54] Those of Philip II doubled in the period 1556–73 alone, and more than redoubled by the end of the reign.[55] Debts, however, were also increasing. Philip II inherited from his father a debt of at least twenty million ducats, and seems to have left to his successor a debt of five times that amount. But all the desperate financial expedients of the reign, the raising of loans secured on future revenues and the two decrees of suspension of payments in 1575 and 1596 point to the same conclusion: expenditure was soaring beyond revenue. In 1588 the expenses of the Armada preparations alone were costing 900,000 ducats a month, as Philip himself admitted to the cortes in June of that year. During the last ten years of his reign, the crown's insolvency could hardly be disguised.

Of all the items of revenue possessed by the Spanish crown that from the Indies was the one which most impressed Spaniards and foreigners alike. Compared with receipts from other sources, however, it was not spectacular.[56] The sums derived from the Indies—consisting of the royal fifth, the alcabala, customs duties and the *cruzada*—increased rapidly during the last two decades of the reign of Philip II, and between 1590 and 1600 they reached an annual average of more than four times as much as in the early 60's. Even so, they still formed a smaller proportion of total revenue than used to be supposed. The crown's American revenue rose from about

[54] See above, pp. 59–63.

[55] Modesto Ulloa, *La Hacienda Real de Castilla en el reinado de Felipe II* (Madrid, 1977); Felipe Ruiz Martín, 'Las finanzas españolas durante el reinado de Felipe II', *Cuadernos de Historia*. Anexos de la Revista Hispania, 2 (1968), 109–173.

[56] See above, p. 61.

11 per cent. of total income in 1554 to about 20 per cent. in 1598. At its highest this was no more than Philip II's revenue from ecclesiastical sources and much less than the amounts extorted from the unfortunate taxpayers of Castile. Yet receipts from America were invaluable windfalls by any reckoning, and their sheer size gave Spain the extra power which she possessed in the sixteenth century. Moreover, the considerable returns derived by individual Spaniards from the Indies—averaging two-and-a-half times those of the crown during Philip II's reign—played an important part in enabling the king's subjects to pay the various domestic taxes at rates which would otherwise have been impossible. For Spain was no parasite on its dependent states. All the other European possessions of the crown had long ceased to be positive sources of revenue: in the Low Countries, Milan, Naples, and Sicily the revenues were progressively absorbed on the spot. There only remained Spain, or rather Castile, and the permanent presence of Philip II in the Peninsula together with comparative domestic tranquillity enabled him to organise more effective demands on taxpayers, even on the grandees, than the emperor had ever been able to do. In the course of his reign the list of Castilian taxes was ruthlessly increased, with the imposition of new duties or the modification of old ones. The master tax was the alcabala, which took one-tenth of the price of all sales transactions and rose in the second half of the century to 14 per cent. This too was a rising revenue (from 1,200,000 ducats in 1561 to 3,700,000 in 1574), and one which hit the consumer as well as the producer. Naturally there were complaints, as towns, cortes, and theologian-economists protested against the monstrous growth of taxation. In 1563 Cadiz declared that rising impositions were ruining its commerce. In 1571 the cortes blamed the disturbing rise of prices not on American treasure but on the facts which they had before their very eyes: 'it is due to these taxes and the high cost of all the necessities of life that so few people can live without difficulties'.[57] But the state was blind to all difficulties except its own, and, faced with inflation and the cost of war, knew no other policy than to raise its demands.

Some of these demands fell heavily on the church. Philip II's revenue from ecclesiastical sources was a permanent and major item in his budget, comparable with his income from America. The most valuable ecclesiastical revenue, and one which bankers regarded as the best security for their loans, was the *cruzada*, or crusade subsidy, granted by the papacy to the crown in the form of a bull of crusade in which spiritual benefits were conferred upon the faithful in return for a money offering. Long after its original justification—the war against the Moors—had gone, the *cruzada*

[57] Cortes of 1571, *Actas*, iii. 357.

continued to be renewed, partly because of the Turkish threat in the Mediterranean and partly because it was regarded as granted to the king of Spain for the purpose of promoting Catholicism. In the reign of Charles V the *cruzada* ceased to be an emergency measure and became a regular source of royal revenue, renewed—though sometimes reluctantly—by the pope at three-yearly intervals for the rest of the century. In the course of Philip II's reign its yield was roughly doubled.[58] Whereas the *cruzada* was a direct contribution from the laity, the *subsidio*, or subsidy, was a tax on the rents, lands, and other forms of income enjoyed by the clergy. Finally, there were the *tercios reales*, or royal tithes, and the rents of the military orders. Philip II inherited all this revenue and added to it. In 1567 Pius V granted him a new tax called the *excusado*, which was a tax upon the property of each parish and was intended for the war in Flanders. There was, therefore, a financial reason why the crown should encourage the enormous growth of church property in Spain, because the church was a rich source of taxation. It is difficult to assess the amount of Philip II's revenue from ecclesiastical sources and its proportion to his total income, but clearly it was considerable; it was, moreover, a rising revenue and one which, by the end of the reign, probably amounted to 20 per cent. of his entire income. In 1574 Don Sancho Busto, acting bishop of Toledo, complained to Philip II that more than half of the church's revenue was being taken by the state for its own use, and that the Spanish king was a poor example for Lutheran rulers to follow, as his methods were no better than theirs.[59] It might be added, indeed, that his methods were probably more effective than those of Protestant rulers who confiscated church property. The English crown sold monastic land for ready cash and failed to derive a long-term revenue from it. Philip II, on the other hand, by maintaining and extending church property and then taxing a prosperous institution ensured that the Spanish state possessed yet another source of revenue, and one that was permanent and sheltered. It was not only the Indies which gave Spain greater financial power than her English rival; the Spanish church also played its part.

While these enormous taxes never caught up with expenditure, they soon outstripped the primitive means available for collecting them. One of the weaknesses of the Spanish state in the sixteenth century—a weakness which it shared with most of its neighbours—was that it did not have the agencies capable of establishing perfect communication with the mass of the taxpayers. The obstacles arose not simply from the constitutional

[58] E. Pacheco y de Leiva, 'Relaciones vaticanas de Hacienda española del siglo XVI', *Escuela Española de Arqueología e Historia en Roma. Cuadernos de Trabajo*, iv. (1918), 67. See also J. Lynch, 'Philip II and the Papacy', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Series, ii. (1961), 26–28.

[59] Lynch, 'Philip II and the Papacy', *op. cit.*, 27.

prerogatives of the eastern kingdoms of Spain but also from a defect in central administration. Charles V and Philip II had no state bank, and thus they were utterly dependent on private bankers. When Philip II returned to Spain in 1559 his greatest preoccupation for the next ten years was to bring order into his finances. Advice was pouring in from all sides, but in the final analysis he was invariably recommended to turn to the Fuggers, or the Genoese, or the Malvendas. The dispersion of his states and his many overseas commitments involved a dispersion of revenues to be collected and of payments to be made, and only the international merchant houses had the means of doing this. The transfer of money, one of the basic financial needs of an empire like Spain, alone demanded recourse to merchant-bankers. But the latter fulfilled another rôle: they advanced money, and thus mobilised government revenue before it was due. To do this they often had to be given the actual collection of taxes or the right to administer their mortgages. The Genoese had the monopoly of the sale of playing cards in Spain and control of certain salt works in Andalucía. The Fuggers were given the administration of the mercury mines of Almadén and the silver mines of Guadalcanal in southern Spain, as well as of the property of the military orders; the latter concession meant that vast grain lands, pastures, tolls, and peasant dues were placed under foreign control, to exercise which the Fuggers introduced their own agents, German, methodical, and zealous. Even when the collection of revenue escaped the hands of foreign firms, it was often given to intermediary agencies such as the towns or the cortes, because the state itself was not equipped for such a task.

Most of this revenue was spent faster than it was collected, and most of it went on naval and military expenditure, especially for the maintenance of Spanish troops in the Low Countries and for financing the war there from 1567 onwards. Here the problem was one of getting money to the spot where it was needed. To keep the Low Countries supplied there was an apparently simple solution—the king could send cash directly on his own account, limited only by the regularity of treasure imports from America. For a long time the sea route through the Atlantic and the English channel was open and fairly secure, and it was simply a question of shipping money at Bilbao or Santander and sending it without any intermediary to financial agents in Antwerp.[60] There were operations of this kind under Charles V and in the early years of Philip II's reign. From 1567, however, with the menacing arrival of the Duke of Alba in the Low Countries, England turned hostile; her piracy increased and her blockade

[60] Braudel, *op. cit.*, 377–98. H. Lapeyre, *Simón Ruiz et les 'asientos' de Philippe II* (Paris, 1953), 13–14.

of the Channel was begun, as could be seen in the seizure of the Duke of Alba's pay ships in 1568.[61] When better relations were resumed, Spain had then to reckon with another enemy—Dutch pirates, whose operations were intensified after the capture of Brill by the Sea Beggars in 1572. In these circumstances the transport of money to the Low Countries by the Atlantic route was becoming too risky and could only be undertaken occasionally by convoys or skilful blockade running.

Another route had to be found. The most direct one was through France; but although this had the advantage of being shorter it was also subject to interruption during the wars of religion and to the inconvenience of transporting heavy loads of metal in cumbersome convoys of beasts and vehicles, accompanied by large military escorts. In any case, the French government disliked operations of this kind in its own territory, especially as they were directed to financing a policy with which it was not necessarily in agreement. Between 1566 and 1581 one of the objects of Spanish diplomacy was to secure safe conduct for transport of money across France. The need was urgent; by 1572 the position of the Duke of Alba, who had been short of money almost since his arrival in the Low Countries, was desperate. But at the end of that year the first great land convoy of precious metals got through; 500,000 ducats reached him with the help of French visas. There were further convoys, and assignments were also made across France through merchants or by smuggling. But the French route was never more than a makeshift one and had little importance after 1578.

By then a new route had been established, across the western Mediterranean from Barcelona to Genoa, in conditions of relative security and dependent on no passport. This route was probably initiated in the early 1570's when Spanish capital was needed in Italy for the war against the Turk. But it was also a means of supplying the Low Countries, for from Genoa the money could be taken by land via Milan and across Savoy, Franche-Comté and Lorraine, territories which were either subject to the Spanish crown or belonging to friendly princes. The security of the route enabled royal remittances to be increased, and vast sums of money reached Farnese via Milan in 1584, 1586, and 1588. But in spite of these direct assignments from the treasury, Philip II could not dispense with private merchant-bankers, and more money was sent through them than by his own account. Between 1586 and 1588, when plans for the invasion of England from the Low Countries were reaching their crucial stage, there was a series of enormous *asientos*, or loan-contracts, many of them amounting to more than a million ducats and one of them reaching two-and-a-half millions. For Spanish policy, and the war supplies which fed it, could not

[61] See below, pp. 152–53.

await the annual and often overdue treasure imports from the Indies. Only the businessmen could provide regular deliveries of funds and effect their necessary transfer, thanks to their international network of fairs and exchanges. And if the government had to seek the assistance of financiers in Spain itself, it was even more dependent on them for the supply of the Low Countries, where the Spanish authorities were beset with ever-increasing difficulties and constantly hampered by lack of money. The financiers rescued the crown from many of these difficulties, and in the last years of Philip II they were making payments from month to month. From the services they rendered, of course, they received immense advantages, profiting from an improving rate of exchange, from the interest on the debt—especially as there was usually delay in repayment—and from the licence to export cash which they could then resell at a profit.

The Spanish and Flemish *asientos*, therefore, brought together demand and supply.[62] After trying to make payments through Italian and German financial centres, which were too far removed from the Low Countries, the Spanish Council of Finance found the correct formula in 1589 in the *asiento* of 2,400,000 écus made with Agostino Spinola. This huge operation assured the governor of the Low Countries monthly payments on the spot, and was followed by many others which carried similar clauses; that of four millions in 1595 marked the determination to pursue a yet more vigorous policy in the Low Countries. Repayment terms varied, according to the state of the Spanish treasury: the account was settled in Spain itself, some of it in cash, and the rest in charges on income from the Indies or on other revenues of the crown at future dates.

In providing for the Netherlands, the Spanish Council of Finance certainly made progress in the art of using businessmen for the service of the state, but financiers charged heavily for their advances. No one was more aware of the financial damage than Philip II himself, but in view of the demands on Spanish policy there was no alternative short of liquidating many of his imperial interests. Indeed, these *asientos* were the largest financial operations in Europe in the period 1580–96.[63] This was due in the first place to the influx of precious metals from America; these benefited not only Spain but also Italy, the Low Countries, and even France, which in spite of being outside the Spanish political system received a share of Spanish money, representing the surplus of its favourable balance of trade with Spain. Secondly, the increase in the amount of funds at the disposal of financiers was also due to the fact that it was only in the service of the state that capital could be used. The

[62] Lapeyre, *Simón Ruiz et les 'asientos' de Philippe II*, pp. 17–20, 41; Carande, 'Un banquero de Felipe II en Medina del Campo', *Moneda y Crédito*, num. 49 (Madrid, 1954), 13–23.

[63] Lapeyre, *Simón Ruiz et les 'asientos' de Philippe II*, pp. 103–4.

reason for this was the decline of commerce, which was particularly noticeable from 1585, the year in which Spain reoccupied Antwerp. The situation was similar in the Peninsula itself where there was a general decline in the activity of commercial towns. As a result of the war which Spain was waging against England and the Low Countries, the Atlantic ceased to be a trade route and became a theatre of war. The decline of commerce left businessmen with increased funds at their disposal at the very time when the Spanish government needed more and more money. This coincidence led to an increase in the number of *asientos* and made them the principal source of revenue for large merchant houses. Under the impact of war and the pressure of Spanish foreign policy, commerce declined while finance prospered. This prosperity, however, was artificial, since it was founded on a decadent economy. And the crushing burden of war led to a suspension of payments by Spain in 1596 and forced even Philip II to consider a policy of peace, a sign that political forces were being overwhelmed by economic ones.

Indeed the financial position of the crown was growing unbearable. The vast increase of American silver production from 1580, it is true, gave further impetus to Spanish imperialism: American silver not only provided its quota for the Portuguese war but also paid for the success of Farnese in the Low Countries, the preparation of the Armada, and the ruinous intervention in the affairs of France from 1589. But this constant influx of precious metals still remained insufficient to meet the enormous cost of Habsburg policy. Consequently, as neither ordinary nor extraordinary revenue was sufficient, the state was forced to fall back on other devices, first of all on further credit, which only aggravated the problem by its crippling rates of interest, then on unilateral declarations of bankruptcy, repeated in 1557, 1575, 1596, 1607, 1627, and 1647. When the time came to liquidate its debts, the crown proclaimed its inability to pay and thus suspended payments. This inevitably deterred many bankers, yet not to the point of outright withdrawal. For by suspension of payment they did not lose everything, nor did the state *annul* its debts: in a sense this device was a conversion of debts into long-term credit titles to future revenues. These *juros*, however, expanded beyond the actual resources of the crown; at the end of Philip II's reign they represented the enormous sum of 100 million ducats and came to form a paper currency which quickly depreciated and caused wild speculation. Therefore, although it was in the interest of bankers to continue to cooperate with their client, they would charge much higher rates of interest—70 per cent. was not unknown. Meanwhile, the state itself was involved in a vicious circle, for the only remedy it knew was to mortgage the future.[64]

[64] Braudel, *op. cit.*, 397–98, 783–84; see also, Carande, *El crédito de Castille en el precio de la política imperial*. Discurso leido ante la Real Academia de la Historia (Madrid, 1949).

CHAPTER V

COMMERCE AND EMPIRE

1. Communications

The political and economic interests of the Spanish empire and its relations with the outside world were utterly dependent on the efficiency of its communications. Here it had to contend not only with the hostility of France and England but also with the obstacles of distance. For Spain was situated not in the heart of Europe but on its periphery, and while this was a vital asset in its rôle as a colonial power it was a hindrance to the integration of its European possessions and to commercial relations with outside states. The factor of distance was felt by the state as well as by merchants; Spanish troops and naval units were usually operating far from their base in the Peninsula, and their transport and supply added greatly to the budgetary difficulties of the crown, just as the distance from markets added to the freightage costs of Spanish merchants. But communications were slow as well as expensive; and this, too, affected not only the actions of administrators but also the decisions of merchants and their knowledge of the market. Nevertheless, Spanish transport was not overwhelmed by these problems, and it managed to provide a relatively efficient service: within Spain, certainly, the isolation of the various regions from each other was to some extent overcome.

The Royal Association of Carters covered the country with a network of commercial links. In the sixteenth century, of course, sea transport was superior to that by land because it was much quicker. There were times, however, when it was not only safer to carry goods by land but also unavoidable. Internal waterways played little part in Spanish transport, for the Tagus and other rivers were not navigable. Consequently, the carriage of goods within Spain was limited to beasts of burden and the *carretas* (long, narrow ox-carts); the latter were four-wheeled vehicles and difficult to use in a land so rugged and mountainous as Spain, where, except in the Basque country, roads were neglected by the state, local authorities, and merchant gilds alike. The principal method of transport, therefore, was provided by horses and even more by mules, whose qualities of strength and endurance made them not only useful for agricultural labour but also indispensable for carrying freight across the vast and roadless distances of the Iberian peninsula. In the reign of Charles V the royal surveyor, Alfonso de Herrera, calculated

the number of mules operating in internal transport as 400,000, and fortunately for Spanish economic interests their number increased throughout the sixteenth century. The mule convoys crossed the peninsula in all directions and gave Castile access to the peripheral states and to the outside world. The two principal routes were from Castile to the Mediterranean ports, especially the wool ports of Cartagena and Alicante, and from Castile to Bilbao, via Burgos and Medina del Campo, for trade with northern Europe. On the other hand, the Spanish government, under pressure of the horse-breeders of Andalucía, had forbidden the use of mules for riding, and that was the reason why the infirm Christopher Columbus, for whom a horse's gait was too rough, had to petition King Ferdinand in 1505 for special permission to ride a mule in order to go to court in pursuit of his claims against the crown. By the mid-sixteenth century, the breeders needed little protection, for the supply of horses—of which the best came from Andalucía—could not keep pace with growing civilian and military demands. So precious was this commodity that Philip II considered it necessary personally to examine all requests for licence to export horses, and in this matter he entrusted the frontier guard not to his customs officials but to the most efficient agency he had, the Inquisition—which then justified its anti-smuggling operations with the argument that it was preventing the export of horses to Huguenots and Lutherans. In spite of formal prohibition, however, there was a thriving horse trade from Spain to France.[1]

Spain had the second largest merchant marine in Europe in the sixteenth century, surpassed only by the Dutch. The main routes of maritime commerce lay in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.[2] With the expansion of the Turk and the decline of Catalan trade, the Spanish routes to the eastern Mediterranean had fallen into virtual disuse, and there only remained the trade to Italy, from Alicante via the Balearics and the south of Sardinia, carrying wool to the ports of Genoa, Leghorn and Venice, supplemented from the 1570's by the Barcelona–Genoa route which was used for transit of government money and supplies. In the Atlantic, too, traditional Spanish communications were threatened by foreign enemies. The principal route, from Bilbao, Laredo or Santander to Antwerp—the bridge between Castile on the one hand and England and the Hanse towns on the other—was one of the most frequented shipping lanes in Europe until the period 1568–75, and Spanish ships carried a large portion of the maritime trade between the peninsula and northern Europe.[3] By 1575, however, the hostility of England

[1] Braudel, *op. cit.*, 353; Lapeyre, *Une famille de marchands: les Ruiz*, p. 593.
[2] The trans-Atlantic route is discussed below, pp. 161–68.
[3] G. Connell Smith, *Forerunners of Drake: a study of English trade with Spain in the early Tudor period* (London, 1954), p. 14; Usher, 'Spanish ships and shipping in the 16th and 17th centuries', *op. cit.*, 212.

and the Dutch, together with the economic collapse of Antwerp and the bankruptcy declared by the Spanish crown, badly hit commercial communications between Castile and the Low Countries. But there still remained the routes to France, though Huguenot pirates rendered these insecure, too. From Lisbon, Sanlucar, Seville and Cadiz ships sailed to Rouen, which became the most active Atlantic port of France, for in addition to exporting the products of Brittany it also substituted for Antwerp when the Dutch corsairs made the Channel and the North Sea route too risky. From Nantes, at the mouth of the Loire, there were two other routes, one to the Andalusian ports, based on the interchange of French wheat against Spanish salt and irregular in its traffic, and another to Bilbao and Santander, carrying French wheat and textiles in exchange for iron and treasure.

These two areas of shipping had their own distinctive vessels. The traditional Mediterranean vessel was the *galera*, or galley, a long and rapid boat driven by oars, an instrument of war against the Turk and the Barbary pirates as well as of commerce. But from the beginning of the sixteenth century the galley was being challenged by the *carraca*, which was round and short and possessed greater resistance to waves. The round type of vessel with a wide bottom was more characteristic of the Atlantic and its heavier seas, and here trade was served by a variety of ships—the *carabelas*, of Portuguese origin and the instrument of the great discoveries; the *galeones*, with their high sides, round rig and great castles on the prow for military purposes, slower in speed but equal in fame to the *carabelas*, used for conveying the treasure of the Indies and in the Invincible Armada; and the Biscayan *zabras*, small, rapid vessels, and very useful for active commerce.

Commerce was also served by an efficient postal service. The Spanish postal system was not originally a public service, nor was it a state monopoly. The crown had organised its own postal service for government needs, but it was not the only one. The universities, the towns, the associations of merchants, all had their own, though in the sixteenth century the royal post tended to eclipse its rivals and it received a lot of private patronage, especially when it was officially opened to the public in 1580. The official post was in the hands of the Taxis family, one of whose members had acquired the office of postmaster-general of Castile at the beginning of the sixteenth century. By the end of the century they were running six main routes from Madrid—north to the French frontier via Burgos and Irun, north-east to Barcelona via Zaragoza, east to Valencia, south to Seville, south-west to the Portuguese frontier via Toledo and Caceres, and west to Valladolid. The royal mail also ran an international service, the most rapid line of which was to Flanders across France, taking seven to eight days from Burgos to Brussels; there was also a regular service to Italy which left Madrid once a

fortnight for Irun, Lyons, Genoa, Milan, Rome, and Naples, and took about 24–27 days to reach Rome.[4]

These communications were vital for commerce; the house of Ruiz, for example, averaged seven or eight letters daily in the years of its greatest activity. But the organisation of trade was also highly developed in other directions. The commercial classes of Burgos, Bilbao and Seville formed powerful merchant gilds, regulating and protecting their own interests, and had their agents in key-places abroad, like Antwerp, Rouen, and London.[5] Spanish commercial technique of the sixteenth century showed no significant advance on that introduced into Spain in the middle ages by Italian merchants, who were already familiar with double-entry book-keeping and bills of exchange. There was some improvement of method, and Spanish merchants were at least as up to date in their ways as their colleagues abroad, but this was still a far cry from the joint stock companies of the seventeenth century. The mentality was still medieval too, and merchants were reluctant to break canonist doctrine, especially on the question of profit and usury; as the church opposed the taking of interest on credit, lenders—with the help of theologians—had to disguise it in a complicated system of contracts in which the notion of risk always entered. Yet this hardly handicapped Catholic businessmen against their Protestant colleagues, for the great European bankers of the time—the Fuggers, Spinolas, Bonvisis, and Capponis—were all Catholics and probably led their Protestant rivals in financial and commercial affairs.[6] On the other hand, their regard for religion tended to make businessmen in Spain more scrupulous than many of those in other countries. In 1586, for example, the governor of Brittany, who had been the victim of English piracies, seized goods belonging to some English merchants and sold them to the agent of the Ruiz who despatched them to his firm in Spain. There, theologians were consulted, and they judged that the purchase was unacceptable on the ground that the governor could not administer justice himself in time of peace—England was at war with Spain but not with France—or make good a robbery by one Englishman by taking from another, without having letters of marque from his sovereign.

When the sixteenth-century merchant had accumulated sufficient capital he often turned to credit operations as a more lucrative source of profit, without necessarily abandoning trade. The career of Simón Ruiz was probably the best example in Spain of such a process. The deposit banker,

[4] Lapeyre, *Une famille de marchands: les Ruiz*, pp. 165–70; J. Devos, 'La poste au service des diplomates espagnols accreditès auprès des Cours d'Angleterre et de France, 1555–1598', *Bulletin de la Commission Royale d'Histoire*, ciii. (Brussels, 1938), 205–467.

[5] See R. S. Smith, *The Spanish Guild Merchant. A history of the Consulado, 1250–1700* (Durham, N.C., 1940).

[6] Lapeyre, *Une famille de marchands: les Ruiz*, pp. 126–37, 230–361.

on the other hand, was officially excluded in Spain from engaging in lending. However, deposit bankers at the Medina del Campo fairs engaged in speculation, and the banking houses of Seville often used their customers' funds in investments in the colonial trade or loans to merchants, charging their depositors no commission and permitting them overdrafts.[7] Banking in Seville prospered in the third quarter of the sixteenth century, though bankruptcies were not infrequent, owing to the uncertainties of the arrivals of treasure, its frequent confiscation by the government, the regular suspension of payments by the state, and the generally speculative nature of the banks.

The main centres for exchange operations and for financial relations with foreign markets were the fairs of Castile—Villalón, Rioseco, and Medina del Campo—which had originated in the middle ages as centres of domestic and foreign trade but now became chiefly centres of exchange, reaching a notable prosperity in the first half of the sixteenth century.[8] As they were financial markets, at which debtors, including the state, fulfilled their obligations, the fairs were dependent on the arrival of treasure in the Indies fleets, and as the latter could not keep to a fixed date there was great difficulty in synchronizing the two. The integration of all the fairs into that of Medina del Campo in 1567–68 afforded some improvement, but in the following years delays in payments increased; some Spanish merchants went bankrupt, causing a further hold-up in transactions, and the general difficulty in cashing bills restricted the exchanges effected by foreign merchants on the Medina fairs. In 1575 the disastrous suspension of payments by the crown, together with the enormous increase of the alcabala tax, caused the collapse of financial and commercial operations, and the Medina fairs remained in abeyance until 1578. In that year the guarantees given by the crown to creditors tempted back the Genoese and others, and Medina recovered a little of its former activity, especially from 1590, during the period of highest silver imports from America. But again, from 1594 to 1598, delay in the arrival of the fleets prevented fairs from being held. Meanwhile, Madrid had been taking much financial business from Medina, and with the definite establishment of the court there in 1606 it became the financial as well as the political capital of Spain. The policy of the government, therefore, and the wars in which it was involved, had their effect on the money market. They were also harmful to commercial activity in general and aggravated the problem of balance of payments.

[7] *Ibid.*, 263; Carande, *Carlos V y sus banqueros. i. La vida económica de España*, pp. 198–206, 223.

[8] See C. Espejo and J. Paz, *Las antiguas ferias de Medina del Campo* (Valladolid, 1912); Carande, *Carlos V y sus banqueros. i. La vida económica de España*, pp. 211–34; Lapeyre, *Une famille de marchands: les Ruiz*, pp. 476–99.

2. Foreign Trade and the Balance of Payments

In spite of the contempt for trade and the shortage of merchant vocations among Spaniards, Castile underwent remarkable commercial progress under Charles V and Philip II, assisted principally by the exploitation of the New World. This experience, however, was not shared by eastern Spain, whose foreign trade had already become increasingly sterile.[9] The pact of 1528 between Charles V and Andrea Doria gave the Genoese considerable privileges, with the help of which they were able to introduce their cloths into Sicily and Naples, the traditional markets of the Catalan industry. Even before this, however, the expansion of the Turk, the difficulty of trading with the infidel, and the decay of the Catalan merchant marine, had hastened the commercial decline of eastern Spain. Subsequently, the southern ports of Málaga and Alicante eclipsed Barcelona and Valencia, because they were nearer to the Atlantic trade and also positioned at the opening of the route via the Balearic islands to Italy; here were loaded the diverse products of Spain's overseas empire—cochineal, pepper, American hides and sugar—for re-export in the Mediterranean.[10] On the other hand, a modest trade between Barcelona and the nearby ports of Marseilles, Genoa, and Leghorn survived, for they were the entrepôts for the Catalan export–import trade with those distant countries of the eastern Mediterranean which had previously traded directly with Barcelona. In Genoa Catalan merchants bought the spices and silks of the East, a trade which was hit but not destroyed by direct Portuguese access to the East Indies: and in the second half of the century they bought in Leghorn the wheat which had been imported from northern Europe by Hanseatic, Dutch, and English shippers.

Having lost its traditional position in the Mediterranean, however, the obvious reaction of Catalonia was to attempt to acquire a new one in the Atlantic by participating in the trade of Castile with the Indies. In 1522 the first petition of Barcelona to trade with America was refused, just as the requests of other foreigners within the Spanish monarchy were refused. So the Catalan merchants then tried to practise indirect trade by getting a foothold in Seville, where fraud and contraband were rife, and so into the American market. But there was opposition here too, and in 1534 the Catalans were refused permission to have a consul in Seville or Cadiz. They then directed their efforts to markets in Castile, the gateway to America,

[9] On Aragon see I. de Asso, *Historia de la economía política de Aragón* (new edn. by J.-M. Casas Torres, Zaragoza, 1947); on Catalonia see J. Carrera Pujal, *Historia política y económica de Cataluña (siglos XVI–XVIII)* (Barcelona, 1947); also, H. Lapeyre and R. Carande, *Relaciones comerciales en el Mediterraneo durante el siglo XVI*, Ponencia del VI Congreso de la Historia de la Corona de Aragón (Madrid, 1957).

[10] Braudel, *op. cit.*, 167–68.

and in the 1530's were selling Catalan cloths in Medina del Campo, the principal supply centre of Spanish cloths for the trans-Atlantic market. Again, however, there were difficulties, this time in the form of severe competition from Flemish, English and French clothiers, for while the latter could place their goods directly in the ports of Seville or Cadiz, on payment of moderate customs duties, the Catalan exporters to Castile suffered from the fiscal barriers between the constituent states of the empire and had to pay three sets of duties—the Catalan customs, transit dues across Aragon, and entrance duties at the 'dry ports' of Castile. Finally, as the century progressed, Catalan industries and exports suffered from the same vicissitudes as those of Castile.

Yet Castile itself enjoyed considerable commercial prosperity in the sixteenth century.[11] Without transforming a society which was still thoroughly rural, military, and religious, and where most trade was still domestic and local, the influx of silver from America gave a vigorous impulse to its economy. Desire for gain animated merchants and increased their number, and led them to more daring speculations. The literature of the time is full of allusions to the frantic scramble for wealth, which astonished and scandalised contemporaries. The limitless enterprise of the Gradas of Seville was recorded by the Dominican theologian from Mexico, Tomás de Mercado, in a remarkable passage:

> First they deal in all parts of Christendom and even in Barbary. To Flanders they ship wool, oil and wine, and bring therefrom every kind of haberdashery, tapestries and books. To Florence they send cochineal and hides, and bring back strings of gold, brocades, silks, and from all these countries a great quantity of cloth. At Cape Verde they trade in negroes, a business which demands large capital and gives considerable returns. To all the Indies they ship great cargoes of every kind of merchandise, and return with gold, silver, pearls, cochineal and hides in vast quantities. Finally, to insure their cargoes (which are worth millions) they have to take out insurances in Lisbon, Burgos, Lyons and Flanders, because so vast are their shipments that neither the merchants of Seville nor of twenty cities like Seville are capable of insuring them.[12]

The part played by genuine Castilians in this commercial expansion is more difficult to determine. Spaniards were not necessarily averse to trade, as long as its returns were lucrative and rapid. Indeed, as far as the wool

[11] See L. Reitzer, 'Some observations on Castilian commerce and finance in the sixteenth century', *Journal of Modern History*, xxxii. (1960), 213–33; Lapeyre, *Une famille de marchands: les Ruiz*, p. 120.

[12] *Suma de tratos y contratos de mercaderes*, quoted Lapeyre, *Une famille de marchands: les Ruiz*, pp. 118–19.

trade was concerned, although the Genoese dominated all the south of Spain—New Castile and Andalucía—Spaniards held their own in the north—Old Castile and the Cantabrian coast. In this region the powerful city of Burgos, which had been enriched by the wool trade even before the discovery of America and became a great centre of maritime insurance, had a substantial group of Spanish merchants, and these established colonies everywhere Castilian wool was sold, at Bruges, Antwerp, Rouen, Nantes, and Florence. Medina del Campo, animated by its fairs, was the meeting point of the merchants of Burgos, Valladolid, Segovia, Salamanca, and Madrid, and some rich businessmen lived there, the most illustrious being Simón Ruiz. At Seville, which was more cosmopolitan and contained less prejudice against commerce, Spaniards faced powerful competition from the Genoese, but there too the Burgos merchants posted their factors, emulating the foreigners. Though Spanish merchants could not compete in status or substance with Italians and Germans, they were probably in advance of all other nations in the sixteenth century. Ruiz operated on an international scale. English traders may well have learned double-entry book-keeping in Spain.[13] French merchants of Nantes and Rouen probably acquired the practice of drawing up bills of exchange from Spaniards.[14] Nevertheless, these developments could not disguise the fact that there was an abnormally large number of foreign merchants operating in Spain, as has been seen—the Genoese, who engaged in trade, shipping, and finance; the Germans, who dealt in mining and milling; the English, who were numerous and prosperous in Seville and other southern cities.

Apart from the American trade, the commerce of Castile in the sixteenth century was based principally on the export of raw materials and precious metals against the regular import of manufactured goods and occasional import of provisions. The primary exports were wool, salt, oil, cochineal, iron, hides, and sugar. Cochineal, a magnificent scarlet dye, and hides were re-exports from the Indies, as also was sugar; although the latter could not compete with Portuguese supplies, it made an important contribution to the European market. Iron, of course, came from the Basque country.[15] In

[13] Connell Smith, *op. cit.*, p. xvi.

[14] Lapeyre, *Une famille de marchands: les Ruiz*, pp. 122, 162–63. On the Spanish commercial colony in Antwerp see J.-A. Goris, *Étude sur les colonies marchandes meridionales (Portugais, Espagnols, Italiens) à Anvers de 1488 à 1567* (Louvain, 1925); on the French in Spain see A. Girard, *Le Commerce français à Seville et Cadiz au temps des Habsbourgs* (Bordeaux, 1932).

[15] See T. Guiard Larrauri, *Historia del Consulado y Casa de Contratación de Bilbao y del comercio de la villa (1511–1880)*; H. Lapeyre, 'El comercio de Bilbao en el siglo XVI', in *Curso de conferencias sobre cuestiones históricas y actuales de la economía española*. Universidad de Valladolid, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas, Económicas y Comerciales de Bilbao (Bilbao, 1957).

spite of the repeated prohibitions on export, it departed in great quantities, especially to France—a necessary contraband because it balanced the purchase of grain for the Basque provinces and also because the local metallurgical industry, in spite of its proportions, did not absorb the entire output of ore. Oil, which was used in textile manufacture as well as for food, was produced for export mainly in Andalucía. The latter also had one of the best supplies of salt in Europe, a vital preservative which drew a constant stream of foreign ships to Puerto de Santa María. But the most important export commodity of Castile was wool.[16] The best product came from the herds that had wintered in the warmer pastures of Andalucía and Extremadura, and was known as *merina* or *extremeña*; this was the quota that was reserved almost exclusively for export. The market was dominated by a few great merchants, in the north by those of Burgos and Segovia, in the centre and the south by the Genoese who bought the greater part of the wool sold in the markets of Cuenca, Toledo, and Granada. Purchasing their wool directly from producers or from Mesta warehouses, the merchants shipped it from Bilbao to northern Europe, from Málaga to Italy, and from Seville to the Indies. Although Spanish wool had markets in Italy, France, and England, the principal buyers were the manufacturers in the Low Countries, where it enjoyed a near-monopoly, an economic link which reinforced the political union.

These were the basic exports of Castile. Against them she imported woollen and linen cloths, quality fabrics, books and paper, and occasionally—though becoming more regular—corn and fish. From the Low Countries she took cloth and tapestries; from England cloth, cereals, and tin; from France linen, cereals, hardware, paper, and books; from Italy and Germany cloth and metal products; from Scandinavia fish and timber; from East Prussia naval stores; from Poland and Russia cereals.

These trading conditions obviously bred an adverse balance of payments. In general, the merchandise going from Spain was of small value and consisted of raw materials. She had nothing comparable to the textile trade of France, Flanders, and England, which earned these countries considerable returns in cash. The combined influence of the Mesta and the merchants, who found the export of raw wool more profitable than that of Castilian cloth, ruined any chance of an export trade in textiles. Consequently, the total value of Spanish exports was much less than that of imports, and she had to settle the difference in cash. Contemporaries were well aware of these facts. In 1558, shortly after the great revolution in Spanish prices pre-

[16] H. Lapeyre, 'Le commerce des laines en Espagne sous Philippe II', *Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire Moderne*, 11e série, lix. (1955), 5–8 (Suppl. of *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, ii. (1955).

cipitated by the influx of American silver had initiated a heavy outflow of treasure, Luis Ortíz, an accountant in the government service, presented a report to Philip II in which he clearly formulated the balance of trade doctrine.[17] Spain, he argued, was simply exporting raw materials and relied on foreign imports for manufactured goods, which cost much more than primary products and were often made from the raw material that Spain had originally exported. On the basis of relative costs, Ortíz estimated that the value of imports was eight to ten times that of exports, and that Spain was enriching other countries with the ready cash she had to pay for the adverse balance. And he might have added that the balance was rendered even worse by the fact that in many cases Spain had to pay the cost of foreign shipping to bring in vital imports, for she herself did not have the necessary vessels for carrying cereals and naval stores from northern Europe.

Yet Spanish trade was affected not only by conditions of production and exchange but also by the impact of war in a century when Spain had more enemies than friends. After the classical period of the Habsburg–Valois conflict, which had hit Spanish commerce but not ruined it, the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis improved Spanish commercial prospects, for although Huguenot piracy continued, it concentrated on the Indies trade rather than on trade with northern countries. Nevertheless, it could still damage the latter. During the first French war of religion in 1562 the Huguenot rebels seized the two great commercial towns of Rouen and Lyons, and delivered Le Havre to the English. This became a base for privateering against Catholic vessels of every nation; the Channel passage grew increasingly hazardous, and Spanish trade with Rouen was completely interrupted. The second war of religion (1567–68) and the third (1568–70) also paralysed Spanish trade with France. Yet there were further obstacles to come.

In 1566 the revolt of the Netherlands initiated a long political and religious struggle which was also grievous to Spain's economic interests. The export of Spanish wool to the Low Countries became more and more risky, though in years of peaceful conditions in France Rouen began to act as an intermediary market between Spain and her northern dependencies. From 1568, however, Spain had to reckon with another enemy in northern Europe—England—and was beset by an unofficial alliance of Protestant maritime units, the Rochelois, the Sea Beggars, and the English. And in December of that year Spanish pay ships seeking refuge in English ports from French privateers were seized by the English government.[18] The Duke of Alba clumsily

[17] E. J. Hamilton, 'Spanish Mercantilism before 1700', in *Facts and Factors in Economic History. Essays presented to Edward Francis Gay* (Cambridge, Mass., 1932), pp. 230–33; Carrera Pujal, *Historia de la economía española*, i. lvii–lxii.

[18] See below, pp. 313–14.

retaliated by seizing the goods of English subjects in the Low Countries, but while this immediately worsened relations it hardly compensated for the loss suffered by Spain; it merely produced an English embargo on Spanish and Flemish goods which amounted to a sum estimated at one-and-a-half million ducats. Moreover, English privateers profited from this providential conflict to emulate their French colleagues, and it became even more difficult for Spanish shipping to penetrate the Channel. In these circumstances trade could only survive by devious means; relations between Spain and the Low Countries were conducted at Rouen or St. Malo, and those with England at St.-Jean-de-Luz. The crisis in Anglo-Spanish relations lasted until 1572 and brought great disorganisation in its wake. And there was no sign of respite. On 1 April 1572 the Sea Beggars seized Brill and increased their operations on the Channel and Baltic routes. In the same month, by a commercial agreement with France, England transferred the staple of her merchandise from the Low Countries to Rouen and Dieppe. And throughout the 1570's privateering continued.

From 1582 to 1585, however, there was a short and fruitful respite for Spain.[19] The organisation of the League in France and the subsequent need of the Huguenots to turn their efforts from the Atlantic towards their enemies inland relieved one of the pressures on the Spanish trade routes. At the same time, the ultimate crisis in Anglo-Spanish relations did not begin until 1585, when Farnese's capture of Antwerp was followed by England's decision to intervene directly in the Low Countries. The years immediately before the sailing of the Armada, therefore, were preceded by a period of relative calm and by one of the most propitious periods of Spanish trade, especially with the Indies; this, in turn, produced a prosperity which helped to make the Armada and to retrieve its loss.

The Anglo-Spanish struggle, however, was even more crucial for Spain and her economy than the conflict with France and the Low Countries, for the English attack was directed primarily at the Spanish Indies and their trade routes. Although English intervention in the Low Countries was one item in the series of provocations which caused Philip II to accept the project of invading his enemy, the Armada was regarded primarily as part of the defence system of the Spanish empire, which would repulse the English attack on it by striking at its roots. The expedition was based on the decision to throw the Indies fleets as well as other units into the assault, and was a response not only to the needs of state but also to the demands of Spanish public opinion, especially of the merchant class, which was the one most hit by English policy. All Spanish commercial interests wanted to destroy Elizabeth I. Their hopes, of course, were dashed, but the defeat of the Spanish

[19] See below, pp. 172–73.

Armada did not give England absolute mastery of the Atlantic, for fleets continued to trade with the Indies and bring back its treasure, as will be seen. Some Spanish trade even managed to survive with northern Europe. French ships succeeded in getting through to Spain in convoy, and Spanish merchants continued to export their wool from San Sebastian in well-armed convoys which reached the Lower Seine.[20] Indeed, a limited trade survived with the Dutch and even with England, for war was not total. During the period of the cold war both the Dutch and the English had traded with Spain.[21] England, it is true, had long enforced a policy of excluding vital war supplies from Spain even in neutral shipping, but her Dutch allies took a more lenient view of strategic materials and continued to take grain to the Peninsula.

If her northern enemies continued to provide commercial services for Spain, they did so because they wanted the vital specie which was yielded. The decline of Antwerp prevented it from meeting the credit demands which had previously been made on it and forced merchants to go direct to Spain for bullion. This trade was criticised by some members of Philip II's administration. Don Luis de Requesens, his governor in the Low Countries after Alba, was opposed to Spain trading with her enemies and in 1575 he advised Philip II to exclude Netherlanders, Englishmen and even Frenchmen from Spain and her dependencies, at least for six months. Concern for his vital supplies caused Philip II to defer a decision, and meanwhile he requested further opinions. The reply of an anonymous minister gave various reasons why the proposed measure was impossible: if Spanish ships were prevented from trading to France, England, and the Low Countries, shipowners would end by selling their ships at a time when Spain needed to increase her fleet; in any case, there was no alternative to English, French, and Flemish merchants, and lack of essentials would be serious for Spain and her colonies; finally, if foreigners were prevented from trading openly with America via Spain, then they would do so either clandestinely or via the Canaries.[22] For reasons of this nature trade managed to survive during the unofficial war and even after 1585, though on a limited scale. The Dutch went openly to Spain with cereals in spite of English protests and the increasing opposition of the Spanish authorities. An indirect Anglo-Spanish trade also survived, English merchants buying Spanish goods—oil and cochineal—in Rouen.[23]

A limited trade under war-time conditions represented, of course, a decline from the prosperity of more peaceful years. But this was not the end of the damage caused by state action. The fiscal policy of the crown was another

[20] Lapeyre, *Une famille de marchands: les Ruiz*, pp. 424–25.
[21] For trade between Spain and England before the Elizabethan war see John Brown, *The Marchants Avizo* (first published 1589, ed. P. McGrath, London, 1957).
[22] Quoted in Braudel, *op. cit.*, 490.
[23] Lapeyre, *Une famille de marchands: les Ruiz*, pp. 425–26.

blow to Spanish trade. This policy was not yet animated by the mercantilist object of protecting national production. In fact, the export of certain products—essential foodstuffs, arms and horses—were forbidden. Imports, on the other hand, were presented with few obstacles, except for certain luxury goods which were forbidden by the sumptuary laws. In short, the state paid more attention to taxing exports than imports, for customs duties were regarded primarily as means of raising revenue and not of economic planning. At the beginning of Philip II's reign Spanish customs were moderate, but they were soon augmented, partly from a new duty on wool in 1558 which was further increased in 1564, and partly from the duties on exports from northern ports which were increased in 1565. These additional burdens raised the costs carried by Spanish commerce and were certainly one of the causes of its decline. Indeed, when the government did attempt economic planning it was usually disastrous because based on faulty information and mistaken analysis; this was the case when steps were advocated and taken to discourage the export of goods which were thought necessary to meet domestic requirements.[24] Not content with this, the government positively encouraged imports, as has been seen, and gave further opportunities to foreign producers and merchants, at a time when Spanish prices, by making Spain a good market and a poor supplier, were already operating in favour of importing and against exporting.

Starved of native production, hit by war, and damaged by fiscal policy, Spanish commerce began to limp badly in the second half of the sixteenth century. This, however, did not apply to the Indies trade, the greatest trade in the world and the economic life-line of its owner.

3. Spain and the Indies

Trade between Spain and Spanish America throughout the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century, both in the value and the volume of goods carried, was easily the biggest trans-Oceanic trade in the western world. Together with its principal content—American silver—it became the most important single item in Spain's economy, and without it her position in the second half of the sixteenth century would have been immeasurably weaker. Subsequently, there was an intimate connection between the contraction of the trade from 1630 to 1640 and the decline of Spain under the later Habsburgs. As soon as American sources of wealth ceased to irrigate the Spanish economy, the metropolis began to experience a period of acute difficulties.

Such a prize was not acquired by chance. Spain had political, geographical,

[24] See above, p. 128.

and technical assets which made her more fitted than any other nation in western Europe not only to seize the opportunities of empire but to create them. Portugal, it is true, had opened the way in the fifteenth century, pushing farther out into the Atlantic and south along the African coast in search of negroes, spices, and gold. And the economic and technical progress which made expansion possible were available to other nations than Spain. The existence of merchant bankers and bills of exchange placed instruments of international exchange and above all of credit at the service of overseas commerce, and, during a period of acute shortage of precious metals, assembled capital without which the enterprises would have been impossible. The new methods were perfected first in Italy, as early as the thirteenth century, but Spain was the quickest to learn from them and in this respect was certainly superior to the countries of northern Europe.[25] Nor was she slow to profit from the technical revolution in ships and the art of navigation. In other respects her progress was unique and her experience first-hand. In the art of warfare she led Europe, and this she had learned in the long struggle against the Moors, followed by her campaigns in Italy. The superiority of her arms, particularly of her firearms, were basic factors in the rapid and overwhelming conquest of the Aztecs and the Incas. But Spain had administrative as well as military power. The effective sovereignty of the crown and its agents, as developed by Ferdinand and Isabella, gave Spain the first modern state machinery in Europe and equipped her not only to administer an empire from the metropolis but to export her institutions and officials to new territories.

Spanish colonisation differed in kind from that of Portugal, the only rival in the race for empire. Portugal was less conscious of the political and religious advantages of expansion than her neighbour. Columbus, of course, and his sovereigns, were not uninterested in the gold and spices of the Far East, and Portugal was not unaware of the advantage of turning the flank of Islam. But the search for alliances against the expansion of the Ottoman Turk in eastern Europe and the Mediterranean, and awareness of the power to be derived from imperialism, were far more dominant in Spanish policy than

[25] On Spanish expansion see Francisco Morales Padrón, *Historia del descubrimiento y conquista de América* (Madrid, 1971). On the Spanish empire in America see C. H. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America* (New York, 1947); J. H. Parry, *The Spanish Seaborne Empire* (London, 1966), and Charles Gibson, *Spain in America* (New York, 1966). On the meaning of conquest and settlement for Spain and for Europe see J. H. Elliott, *The Old World and the New 1492–1650* (Cambridge, 1971). On the Indies trade the classic modern account is by C. H. Haring. *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies in the time of the Habsburgs* (Cambridge, Mass., 1918); but all previous works have been virtually superseded by the monumental work of H. and P. Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique (1504–1650)* (8 vols., Paris, 1955–59) which is itself a mine for further research.

in that of Portugal.[26] This difference of emphasis was reflected in the actual process of expansion. The means adopted by Spain in the first years of discovery and conquest—especially the rapidity of operation and the choice of routes—were particularly important in determining the future policy of empire. The search for a western passage to the Far East gave way from the time of the second voyage of Columbus to a desire to exploit the new lands, which he had discovered incidentally, for their own sake; in other words to a policy of colonisation which would at once extend Christianity and yield gold. Once this decision had been taken, the only limit was the amount of territory available. At this point, Spanish policy differed from Portuguese in yet another respect—in the adoption of a relay system of colonisation. Between 1492 and 1498 the exploration of the New World was limited to the Antilles and a few portions of the coast of Tierra Firme, and was controlled exclusively by Columbus. In the second period, 1498 to 1506, Columbus lost his monopoly and exploration turned more to Tierra Firme, with Santo Domingo used as a secondary base for further colonisation. In the third period, 1506 to 1516, Columbus was dead, and although expeditions of the old type continued to leave Spain, the greatest efforts of exploration and conquest were made from the colonies themselves, first from Santo Domingo then from Cuba. Finally, from 1517 to 1535, the massive conquest of the continent was undertaken, of Mexico and Peru; operations which were also launched from existing colonies.

Spanish colonisation was unique not only in purpose and method but also in quantity. From as early as the second voyage, in 1493, Spain threw an unprecedented volume of men and materials into the enterprise—seventeen ships and 1,200 to 1,500 emigrants.[27] In the first eight to nine years about 5,000 or 6,000 men emigrated. This was a sign that Spain had the manpower for expansion, partly because her population was growing, partly because the fall of Granada and the completion of the *reconquista* released

[26] Chaunu, *op. cit.*, viii. 1, pp. 76–85.

[27] On the policy and methods of colonisation see J. Pérez de Tudela Bueso, *Las Armadas de Indias y los orígenes de la política de colonisación* (Madrid, 1956). Complete statistics do not exist to show the exact number of Spaniards who emigrated to the Indies during the colonial period. See C. Bermúdez Plata, *Catálogo de pasageros de Indias durante los siglos XVI, XVII, y XVIII*, (2 vols., Seville, 1932–40); on the first volume, which covers the period 1509–34 and gives 5,320 names, see C. Pérez Bustamente, 'Las regiones españolas y la población de América (1509–34)', *Revista de Indias*, vi. (1941), 81–101; on the second volume, which covers the period 1535–38 and gives 5,600 names, see J. Rodríguez Argua, 'Las regiones españolas y la población de América (1535–1538)' *Revista de Indias*, (1947), 698–748. For a considered modern estimate see Magnus Mörner, 'La emigración española al Nuevo Mundo antes de 1810. Un informe del estado de la investigación', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, 32 (1975), 43–131, who suggests a maximum of 250,000 emigrants for the period 1506–1600, and 200,000 for 1601–50.

forces which had previously been tied down in the Moorish war. Gold was the only possible justification for this enormous operation, and the second expedition of Columbus was financed by expectation of it. The mining and slave-labour characteristics of the colonial economy thus appeared from the very beginning. This form of exploitation presupposed effective occupation of extensive territory and mobilisation of a large labour force. With her powerful military machine and administrative technique Spain had the means to accomplish both.

Yet the search for gold was tempered by a religious mission, without which Spanish expansion would have been inconceivable, or else would have taken a very different form. For the discovery and conquest of America were animated by a spirit of missionary expansion and sustained throughout by all the resources of the church. Here again, Spanish assets were unique. Spain possessed the first reformed church in Europe.[28] The standard of her hierarchy, the quality of her theologians, and the zeal of her missionaries were unequalled in the western world. Moreover, the Spanish church had direct experience of contact with the infidel in the Peninsula itself, and while this accounts for some of its intolerance it also helps to explain its anxiety to extend the faith to those who knew it not. Thus it had the confidence and the personnel to play a vital rôle in colonial expansion. It also had the ideals and the strength to restrain the rampant colonialism of the settler class and to give some features of order and justice to the new empire. For the motives which drove Spain to colonise were mixed. In the classical words of Bernal Díaz, soldier and chronicler of Cortés' expedition to Mexico, Spaniards went to the New World 'to serve God and His Majesty, to give light to those in darkness, and also to get rich'. The church and the crown took the condition of serving God seriously, and the proof is their efforts to convert the Indians and to protect them. But the mass of the colonists were indifferent to these things. As Pizarro explained to a priest who protested at the spoliation of the Indians in Peru and exhorted him to bring them instead to knowledge of God and the faith: 'I have not come here for such reasons. I have come to take away their gold.'[29] Men like Pizarro went to the Indies as a ruling class, to extort labour and money from the natives, and to wage war on them if necessary. The missionaries, anxious to save the souls of the Indians, found their efforts frustrated, and some of them began to offer positive alternatives to existing relations between Spaniards and natives. It was important that the church had the vigour to produce such men and

[28] See above, pp. 7–8, 64–73.

[29] Quoted in L. Hanke, *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America* (Philadelphia, 1949), p. 16, a basic work for the question of race relations in the Spanish empire.

Hernán Cortés

that the crown gave them the opportunity to experiment with their alternatives, such as the peaceful evangelising of Las Casas, the hospital-villages of Vasco de Quiroga in Mexico, and the reductions of the Jesuits in Paraguay and elsewhere. The dilemma, of course, was irreducible. As secular rulers the Spanish kings desired dominion and revenue, and in this the church was compromised too. As Christian monarchs and patrons of the church in America they were committed in conscience to the work of winning the Indians to the faith. But the fact that both objectives were taken seriously meant that royal policy was ambivalent and vacillating. This gave the idealists—bishops, missionaries, and lawyers—the opportunity they were looking for to insert their ideas and their influence in the struggle for justice for the Indians. These Christian humanitarian ideals permeated Spanish colonial legislation, and though they were not always effective in practice they prevented Spain's dominions in the New World from degenerating into a mere robber empire.

The diverse qualities needed in a colonial power were combined uniquely in Spain; she had the objectives and the means. It was no accident, therefore, that Columbus attached his fortunes to those of Castile.[30] He had tried other powers first. Portugal refused his services, because the very progress of geographical speculation and the experience acquired in political and business circles there caused her to refuse to commit herself to a mistaken hypothesis. In any case, Portugal had invested too much in African expeditions and in a search southwards for a direct route to eastern spices to interest herself in the plans of a man whose distances were so patently wrong. Too late for Portugal, Columbus was too early for northern Europe, for whereas Portugal rejected his plans because she knew too much, powers like France and England rejected them because they did not know enough. In Castile, however, where the genius and tenacity of Columbus met the intuition and imagination of Isabella, the ground was almost ready for such a project, though it needed seven years' effort before it finally came to fruition in 1492. These long years of delay are significant. If Columbus had not spent ten years of his life submitting his plans to the whole of western Europe, then the rôle of Castile might be regarded as accidental. But the reply of Isabella, and the financial support of the shippers and businessmen of Niebla, rule out the possibility of chance, because the choice had been offered all round and for a very long time. Moreover, from one compelling point of view, that of geography, Spain was ideal for Columbus's purpose.

Indeed, of all the conditions favouring Spain geographical ones were probably the most important. Andalucía, the spear-head of the *reconquista*, was already a frontier region, with long experience of contact and friction

[30] On Columbus see S. E. Morison, *Admiral of the Ocean Sea* (2 vols., Boston, 1942).

with Islam, and ready to turn reconquest into conquest. More than this, Andalucía was situated at the intersection of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, and at the right latitude; winds and currents made Seville—and Lisbon—the best places from which to take ships out into the Atlantic and bring them back again.[31] From the very beginning, therefore, Andalucía enjoyed a virtual monopoly of communications and commerce with the Indies. Trade was soon confined at the Spanish end to Seville and its satellite ports on the Guadalquivir, and was a monopoly in the hands of a corporation of Seville merchant houses, known as the *Consulado*. In establishing these restrictions, of course, the crown was moved by political, religious, and strategic considerations, as well as fiscal and economic ones. But although this was a legal monopoly—and an object of criticism ever since—it was founded in reality and corresponded to technical and geographical conditions.

In 1495, it is true, Cadiz was *named* as the port of exit; and by the edict of 14 February 1503 which organised at Seville the *Casa de Contratación*, or House of Trade, an agency which administered economic relations between Spain and the Indies, an obligation was imposed on colonial shipping to use only the port of Seville, thus defining permanently the monopoly of Seville and the exclusive right of Castile to relations with the new discoveries.[32] But the orders of 1495 and 1503 simply registered existing facts. In its contracts with entrepreneurs, of whom Columbus was the first, the state confined itself to the rôle of registration, guarantee, and arbitration against future claims. The choice of ports originally depended on private enterprise, and Columbus chose Cadiz and Seville; all the expeditions between 1492 and 1510 left from Andalucía. In other words, it was the experts of the time who chose Andalucía, first Niebla and then, because of the growing size of the expeditions, the Guadalquivir ports of Cadiz, Seville, and Sanlucar. In favour of Seville there was a decisive factor—it was already a centre of commerce, finance, and administration, and therefore contained the personnel and the agencies by which the state could control the new enterprises, using Cadiz and Sanlucar as its ports on the Atlantic coast. It was not, therefore, a question of assuring a monopoly to a single port, but to a whole complex of ports and an entire region, of which Seville was the inland capital.

The monopoly solution, then, was chosen by experts and stood the test of time and of experience. But why, in addition to excluding other states—

[31] 'Le plus Atlantique des pays mediterranéenes, le plus mediterranéen des pays Atlantique', as Chaunu describes Andalucía, *op. cit.*, viii. 1, p. 52.

[32] J. de Veitia Linaje, *Norte de la contratación de las Indias occidentales* (Seville, 1672); R. Antúñez y Acevedo, *Memorias históricas sobre la legislación y gobierno del comercio de los españoles con sus colonias en las Indias occidentales* (Madrid, 1797); Chaunu, *op. cit.*, viii. 1, pp. 182–84.

a universal practice at the time—and other kingdoms within Spain—a sign of the hegemony of Castile—did Spain also exclude other ports like Valencia, Barcelona, La Coruña, and Bilbao? The answer is that before the state excluded them, nature herself did. It would have been unreasonable to add to the difficulties of an already difficult Atlantic crossing. Shipping from the Mediterranean ports was excluded by its dependence on favourable wind and current conditions to navigate the straits of Gibraltar—an extra journey, moreover, in a region which was directly exposed to the Barbary pirates. The Cantabrian coast was better situated, but still could not compete with the advantages of wind and current enjoyed by south-western Spain, at a time when speed and timing were vital and skilled pilots in short supply. And just as the Barbary pirates threatened the junction between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, so the French, and later the English and Dutch, corsairs infested the routes between Spain's northern and southern Atlantic coasts. Before the means of measuring longitude were available, any vessel from northern Spain wanting to make America would have to cling to the coast as far as Cape St. Vincent, and it was precisely along the coast that the northern pirates directed their attacks, for they had little chance of meeting their prey in mid-ocean. If the Indies trade had gone north, it would have been wide open to attack, and an even more tempting target than Spain's European commerce because it was much more valuable. Finally, economic conditions reinforced geographical and tactical ones. In agricultural potential the mountainous northern coast was much inferior to the south. The three main agricultural commodities were grain, wine and oil, and although it was not always possible to export them, when it was they came from Andalucía, which thus provided for the sustenance of crews, emigrants and settlers from sources that were easily accessible to its port.

The state, of course, had its interests too. Faced with the natural facts of monopoly, it found it convenient to underwrite them. For political as well as fiscal reasons, the Spanish government desired to exercise exclusive control over relations with the New World, in order to prevent the emigration of elements dangerous to political and religious security. In the sixteenth century the two things were almost inseparable, and in view of Huguenot pretensions to Florida and English collaboration with the Islamic-led *cimarrones* of Tierra Firme, Spanish policy was no more than realistic. It was equally vital to exercise control over the passage of arms and subversive literature, and to concentrate all the means of defence in order to make them more effective. The crown's interest in a single-port policy, therefore, was obvious, and it soon fashioned a monopoly administration, beginning with the embryo bureaucracy assisting Bishop Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca, Isabella's colonial adviser; in 1503 this blossomed into the *Casa de Contratación*, which found its natural base in Seville. The *Casa*, dependent on the crown, was the vital instrument of monopoly, for it controlled the fleets, shipments, and personnel involved in trade and colonisation. In 1524 it was made dependent on the Council of the Indies founded in that year; the latter ended the personal management of colonial administration exercised by Fonseca and became the crown's central agency for colonial government, with the *Casa* specialising in economic affairs.

Yet the policy of the crown was, if anything, more flexible than that of private shippers and merchants. An edict of Charles V in 1529 opened the outward journey to other ports than Seville and for a time there were prospects of a modification of the rigid monopoly.[33] But this policy was never effectively applied, partly because of opposition from the monopolists, partly because the government itself soon found it necessary to control treasure imports, and above all, perhaps, because the very ports which might have benefited from it did not seriously try to—it was hardly feasible. The law, therefore, was dropped, and in any case the gradual emergence of the convoy system reinforced the channel of monopoly. This is not to say, of course, that it was ever completely effective. There was considerable fraud, and on the return journey in particular much trade and treasure escaped via Galicia, Gibraltar, and Portugal. On the whole, however, the monopoly was observed—up to 97 per cent. on the outward journey for more than a century, and up to 96–98 per cent. on the inward journey.[34] This was *within* the Spanish monopoly. From without came the foreign interloper, plying his unofficial and illegal trade, resistance to which varied in America in proportion to the amount of official trade which the colonies were receiving from the mother country. If the latter was inadequate, then the colonists—often with the connivance of local officials—were ready to break the laws and trade with the foreigner, as happened in the 1540's and 1560's when French, Portuguese, and English interlopers were all active in the Caribbean. However, although the presence of interlopers was almost permanent, it was only from 1620 and still more from 1630 that they really began to make nonsense of the monopoly. Up to that time the rule of Seville was supreme, and Spain preserved for herself the major share of returns from America.

Yet to speak of the 'Seville monopoly' is to ignore the part played by other regions of Spain. While Seville had a monopoly of trade, the north of Spain, especially Biscay, had a monopoly of shipping, for it supplied almost all the Spanish vessels in the Indies trade.[35] Indeed, the northern provinces in general played an important rôle in colonial expansion. The ports of

[33] See above, pp. 76–78.
[34] Chaunu, *op. cit.*, viii. 1, pp. 201–03.
[35] *Ibid.*, viii. 2, 1, p. 405.

Ferrol and La Coruña were defence bases against northern maurauders. The wealth of the north, built, as has been seen, on fishing, metallurgy, shipbuilding, and the export of wool, supplied capital, equipment and goods for the trade, as well as many of its personnel. For much of the sixteenth century this supply was substantial. From 1520 to 1580 the northern coast provided at least 80 per cent. of the shipping on the Indies route. From 1580 to 1610 this fell to 50 per cent., and from the second quarter of the seventeenth century it was only one element among many—a decline which also involved the supply of seamen and was reflected in the depopulation of northern towns, which lost many of their inhabitants to those of the south. For these regions were most exposed to Anglo-Dutch privateering and maritime power, and their prosperity suffered once the route from Bilbao to Antwerp had been cut.[36] But they were only one part of Spain. The early eclipse of a limited sector of the peninsula has been one of the reasons for the tendency to predate the economic decline of Spain. The Indies trade itself, however, continued to flourish and to bring great wealth to its owner long after the 1580's. This was due, among other things, to the increasing efficiency with which Spain defended it against her rivals.

The defence of the colonial monopoly was based essentially on administrative control and naval cover; in addition there were military installations at key points in America itself.[37] Every ship sailing between Seville and the Indies was required to register for each voyage out and back with the *Casa de Contratación*, which kept a record containing a detailed account of the ship, company, and cargo. The officials of the *Casa*, however, were allied by many ties of family, friendship, community of interests, and more or less clandestine financial deals, with the great merchant houses of the *Consulado*, the corporation to which the Seville monopolists belonged. Their duty was to regulate trade; the actual collection of the customs—the *almojarifazgo* collected at the Spanish and the American ends of the trade—was separately farmed. Accordingly, the registration of shipping was rigorously enforced, because it was a means of maintaining the Seville monopoly. The registration of merchandise on the other hand, being the basis for the assessment of duties, was systematically arranged to conceal the nature and value of goods. The over-all quantity of goods could not, of course, be readily concealed; but containers were merely counted, formal statements of their contents were accepted, and the *Casa* regularly and successfully opposed requests of the *almojarifes*, or customs officials, to be allowed to open them for inspection. The basis of assessment was thus arbitrary, formal,

[36] *Ibid.*, vi. 1, pp. 160–67; vii. pp. 36–37; viii. 1, pp. 256–66.
[37] V. E. Chatelain, *The Defenses of Spanish Florida* (New York, 1941); J. A. Calderón Quijano, *Las fortificaciones en Nueva España* (Seville, 1952).

and largely fictitious, and by shipping goods on the warships which escorted the merchant convoys consigners could escape registration altogether. Because of this 'psychosis of fraud', the nature of shipments to the Indies can be ascertained only in the roughest quantitative fashion and it is impossible to estimate the growing quantity of foreign goods being shipped to the Indies within the monopoly.[38] The monopoly itself, however, was also under attack from without.

From an early date communications between Spain and the Indies had to be protected against privateers and pirates, and soon the colonial market itself had to be preserved from foreign interlopers; by Spaniards these were all described by the generic term of *corsarios*. The most dangerous area for shipping in the early decades of trade was between the coast of Andalucía and the Canaries and Azores: here the French and Barbary corsairs operated, lying in wait for Spanish vessels returning from the Indies. Soon, however, the European corsairs extended their operations to the other end of the route and began to prey on the Caribbean. In the first half of the sixteenth century the greatest menace came from France, for not only were the recurrent Franco-Spanish wars also fought in the Atlantic but the Huguenot pirates always regarded Spanish shipping as fair game. In the second half of the century the greatest attack came from English seamen, who, led by Hawkins, first tried to force their way into the Spanish trading system, and then under Drake ended by raiding it outright. Defence was urgent and it was soon provided. From 1512 the *Casa* was under orders to send two caravels to the Canaries to protect ships from the Indies against French corsairs. From at least 1521 a squadron of three to five ships was ordered to patrol between the coast of Spain and the islands; this squadron, which was eventually included in the fleet system, foreshadowed the future *Armada de la Guardia de la Carrera de las Indias*, which became the classical armed escort across the Atlantic. For some years, however, Spanish defence had to be content with its modest beginnings, though in 1513 the *Casa* had been instructed to send two caravels across the Atlantic to patrol the coasts of Cuba and protect shipping at the other end of the crossing.[39] Then, as the danger increased, the defence organisation became more efficient—and more expensive. From 1528 another line of defence appeared, the *armada* called 'para la guardia de costa y navios de Indias'; its exact station is not known, but it evidently provided a defensive bridge between Andalucía and the New World.

These efforts were increased at different times throughout the 1520's and

[38] Chaunu, *op. cit.*, i. pp. 70–88, 97–121.
[39] Haring, *Trade and Navigation*, p. 87; on the French threat see H. Folmer, *Franco-Spanish rivalry in North America, 1524–1763* (Glendale, Calif., 1953).

1530's, according to the incidence of war with France or the amount of piracy, and in this period the origins of the ultimate organisation of the Indies trade can be observed: independent sailings gradually gave way to sailings in convoy, protected by warships. It was in these years, too, that the *avería*, first imposed about 1518, began to operate, at first intermittently for immediate needs and finally as a regular tax; in this way the trade itself was made to bear the costs of defence, particularly of the armed fleets which escorted the convoys.[40] In the 1540's, as the temptation to marauders increased with the amount of trade, larger and more powerful ships were used in the interests of security, and this development was linked with the obligation to sail in convoys of at least ten vessels, escorted by warships which were also growing in size and armament. The system was further developed in the difficult years of war with France during the 1550's, which produced bigger and stronger convoys sailing biannually. Although the war with France officially ended in 1559, Spain was then faced with the new and ever-growing danger from northern Europe, and after many hesitations the convoy system was given its definite form. In 1564 the double convoy —that is, the grouping of two fleets right up to their point of separation in the lesser Antilles, begun during the 1540's—was replaced by two separate annual convoys.[41] Under this reorganisation all ships leaving Spain for the Indies had to sail in convoy, except those that had sufficient armament, the slave ships from Angola, and the *avisos*, or dispatch vessels which maintained communications in the interval between annual sailings. The convoys themselves assembled in Seville, Cadiz, and Sanlucar, and left in two groups: the *flota* sailed in April or May for Veracruz in New Spain, and the *galeones* in August for Nombre de Dios on the isthmus of Panama; from their rendezvous at Havana the combined fleets returned to Spain in the following autumn. In spite of its rigid and clumsy appearance, the convoy system was a successful piece of adaptation. Had Spain been able to develop her imperial communications in peaceful conditions, of course, a swifter and more efficient means of trade would have been necessary and possible. But in view of the refusal of other powers to recognise her monopoly of trade and occupation in America, this was the only possible answer. No doubt the limitation of trade to convoys was partly an attempt to compensate for the shortage of skilled pilots, but the most compelling reason was the search for security; it was no coincidence that the convoys were given their most permanent form at a time when Hawkins was rampant in the Caribbean. The system itself functioned fairly well, in spite of the fact that escort vessels

[40] G. Céspedes del Castillo, *La Avería en el comercio de Indias* (Seville, 1945); Chaunu, *op. cit.*, i. pp. 169–75, 185–94.

[41] Haring, *Trade and Navigation*, pp. 1–20, 123–54, 201–30.

sometimes carried merchandise in the mouths of canons. And it was a powerful reply to Spain's enemies and rivals. To capture or destroy a fleet was extremely difficult; only on rare occasions, in the course of two centuries, was an entire fleet destroyed, as in the disastrous battle of Matanzas in 1628. Normally, casualties were due to the poor condition of ships, to the weather, or to accidents. Indeed, from the 1560's, when the Indies fleets came to be composed almost entirely of larger and more powerful vessels, sailing in convoy, Spain dominated the Atlantic, and this vital channel of imperial communications functioned, if not smoothly, at any rate effectively. The cost, of course, was high—shortages of goods in the colonies which provided further opportunities for the interloper, and a crippling defence tax on the trade itself which only encouraged fraud. And there was little defence of the Pacific coast route between Panama and Lima. But the convoy system was not Spain's last word on defence.

Naval patrols eventually developed into three main units—the *Armada del Mar Océano*, which had a roving brief in the Atlantic, the *Armada de la Guardia de las Indias*, which escorted the convoys, and the *Armada de Barlovento*, which covered the Caribbean area. To these were added squadrons of galleys. The latter were already used for the coastal defence of southern Spain, and although they were costly in manpower and supplies and unsuitable in northern waters, they were effective because of their independence of wind and useful enough to be sent in 1574 to the Indies, where they were used to patrol the coasts of Tierra Firme from Cartagena to Nombre de Dios, of Cuba and of Hispaniola. Yet it was not a successful transfer: shortage of men, an unsuitable climate, and the inability of the vessel itself to cope with ocean waters, all reduced the efficiency of the galley in its new world. But this in turn produced a more successful piece of adaptation—the *galizabra*, a hybrid vessel combining the features of the galley and those of the ocean warship.[42] Finally, in the last decades of the sixteenth century the authorities produced yet another answer to enemy attacks. From 1588, owing to the temporary disorganisation of the regular convoy system caused by the heavy demands of the Spanish Armada on the Indies fleets, squadrons of *zabras*, small, rapid, and well-armed ships, sacrificing everything to speed and chartered at the expense of the crown, were put into service on the trans-Atlantic route to bring back the treasure on which Spanish policy depended. The *zabras* were not meant to combat assailants, for they were not heavy enough, but to escape from them by their speed. In this sense they were an admission of weakness as well as a costly expedient, for they carried no merchandise. But they served the purpose for which they were intended, and were yet another

[42] On the use of galleys at Cartagena de Indias see Chaunu, *op. cit.*, viii. 1, pp. 1035–39, 1042–54.

example of Spain's resilience and a further warning to her northern enemies not to underestimate her defensive power.

Organised, controlled, and protected, the Indies trade expanded with remarkable vitality. Essentially it consisted in placing consumer goods at high prices in the American market and receiving money in exchange. Spanish exports consisted primarily of wine and oil from Andalucía, cloths from central Spain, tools from the Basque country, mercury for the amalgamation of silver, and men. Colonial production which might compete with that of the mother country was prohibited—though not always effectively—but this still left room for the import of the animal and vegetable products of the Indies, some of which Spain herself had transplanted there, such as hides, dye-woods, and sugar, all of which earned money in re-export. But Spaniards placed greatest value on the mineral wealth of the Indies. The great deposits of silver in New Spain and Peru were the economic justification of empire, the magnet of emigrants and merchants, the hope of a bankrupt government; and they were the ultimate reason for the rigour of the monopoly and the care with which it was protected. The material does not exist from which to estimate the production of each mining zone or the total production of America; the only gauge is the amount of metal received in Spain, but this is a defective figure because it does not account for the treasure left in America, that going to the Far East on the yearly Manila Galleon, and that disappearing through channels of fraud and contraband. Nevertheless, even declared imports point to the immense proportions of silver disgorged from the Indies.[43] These imports primed the trade still further and were one of the chief factors in its powerful expansion.

This expansion was not regular but subject to various fluctuations.[44] There was a long period of trade expansion from 1504 to 1610, and a long period of decline from 1610 onwards. Within the first period there were two phases of expansion, one from 1504 to 1550 and one from 1562 to 1592, separated by a mid-century recession of twelve years.

The first great period of expansion, from 1504 to 1550, saw the number of outward–inward sailings increase from 35 in 1506 to 215 in 1550, with the volume of trade increasing by 800 per cent. from 3,309 *toneladas* at the beginning of the period to 32,355 at its end.[45] This was the age of the conquistadores, of rapid colonial expansion, of the first shipments of treasure,

[43] See above, p. 130 n. 42.

[44] The discovery, dating, and analysis of these fluctuations are among the most important contributions of Chaunu to the subject; see his figures and tables, *op. cit.*, vols. ii–vii, and his interpretation, first on a geographical and then on a chronological basis, vol. viii. See especially, viii. 2, 1, pp. 15–25, and Appendix II, Table E.

[45] *Ibid.*, viii. 2, 1, pp. 49–50.

which acted as a stimulus to investment and further conquests. From 1504 to 1510 Spain was sending men, foodstuffs, materials, and animals to the Indies and getting back gold, and in these early years she was running the colonies at a loss for they were absorbing more than they returned. From 1510 to 1522, with the exploitation of the islands—Hispaniola, Cuba, Puerto Rico—returns on investments began to mount, not only in gold but also in sugar. But this expansion was checked during the period 1522–32 when the resources of the island colonies were invested in turn in the colonisation of New Spain.[46] Then, from 1533 to 1544, New Spain began to deliver its wealth, followed by Peru, both of which vastly increased the flow of precious metals. Trade ceased to be insular and became continental in scale; larger ships and more of them began to be employed as expansion made them necessary and made them pay. The greater part of their cargoes was no longer agricultural products but manufactured goods such as textiles and equipment for the mines and sugar mills. At this point the relation between prices and expansion became more direct. When prices rose, everything rose, including the trade. Merchants wanted a return on their investments; producers in America wanted a market for their products in Spain and in the rest of Europe. Correlation depended on merchants and shippers *knowing* the price level and being aware of the financial relationship between Spain and the Indies. From the period 1535–40 this was the case: merchants sent large quotas of goods to the Indies when prices were high in Spain, and less when prices were lower. Therefore, the Indies themselves were the stimulator, causing an inflation in Spain which facilitated the financing of trade with the Indies. The Seville merchants, knowing from experience that a rise of prices in Spain created a presumption in favour of a rise of prices in the Indies, increased their exports in the expectation of heavy returns. Heavy returns of bullion in turn raised prices and trade still further.[47]

The expansion of the first half of the century reached its peak in the six years from 1544 to 1550. By this time territorial expansion was virtually complete, though not yet fully exploited. In 1545 prospectors discovered the mineral wealth of Potosí in the bleak Andes of Upper Peru, and this was to become the biggest source of silver in the world.[48] The number of ships and the volume of trade increased as prices rose further still. In the interests of security against pirates and privateers larger and larger ships were being used, and they were obliged to sail in convoys of at least ten vessels escorted by powerful warships. There were, therefore, two factors

[46] *Ibid.*, viii. 2, 1, pp. 81–141.

[47] *Ibid.*, viii. 2, 1, pp. 142–85.

[48] See Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, passim; C. H. Haring, 'American Gold and Silver Production in the first half of the sixteenth century', *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, xxix. (1915), 475–79; L. Hanke, *The Imperial City of Potosí* (The Hague, 1956).

in expansion—trade and the ships to carry it. As trade expanded so did shipping, and as the supply of shipping could not keep pace with the demands of trade so freightage became dearer. Shortage of ships combined with the attraction of higher freightage prices stimulated more shipbuilding and drew more foreign vessels to Seville. The profits earned from high freight rates then enabled shippers to make further investments and increase the size of their fleets. The time came, however, when the Indies themselves could not respond quickly enough to the commercial demands of the metropolis. This lag of returns to Spain behind exports caused a stock of ships to accumulate in the Indies, not yet ready to return because of the shortage of profitable freight. In Spain, meanwhile, as freight was expensive only costly goods capable of paying it were being consigned. Rapid expansion, therefore, was blocked by two bottle-necks; ships piled up in the Indies and goods in Seville, just at the time when the additional investments in shipbuilding began to bear fruit. As long as high prices gave an incentive to export, all was well. But once prices dropped, or halted, then crisis followed, for on their return to Spain vessels exceeded the demand of a reduced export, and this in turn would hit the shipyards.[49]

These repercussions, of course, took time to make their impact, but from 1550 they were certainly being felt, and expansion was brought to a halt for more than ten years. The outward traffic for 1554—23 vessels compared with 133 in 1550—was the lowest since 1522, and there was an equally drastic fall in the volume of tonnage and its value. The conditions of trade had now changed: the plundering economy of the conquistadores had come to an end, and the expanding frontier of conquest had halted; wealth was no longer available for the mere taking, it had to be created. At the same time prices slumped, and without the prospect of certain profits merchants drew back. When prices began to pick up again after 1554 there was still the mounting war with France to put a brake on trade. It was between 1554 and 1556 that the menace of French privateers was most acute and Spanish shipping losses were heaviest. The merchants in Seville reacted by refusing to consign cargoes, and no convoy left the Guadalquivir for twenty-two months. When sailings were resumed in 1555 they took the form of yet bigger convoys, and while this improved security it also hampered trade, for until the convoy system was perfected it retarded traffic by preventing vessels from turning round quickly for return journeys; this diminished the profits on shipping investments and immobilised commercial capital. And war did further damage. The enormous military effort made by Spain in the 1550's on behalf of Charles V and his son was one of the principal causes of the state bankruptcy in 1557; the subsequent sequestration of money

[49] Chaunu, *op. cit.*, viii. 2, 1, pp. 247–50.

remittances from America encouraged merchants not only to seek to evade it by fraud but also to keep their money in the Indies. As less money was coming in, so less investments were going out, and this reinforced the existing depression.[50]

From 1559, however, there began a long period of expansion which was clearly under way from 1562; between then and 1608 the number of ships on the Indies route increased by 176 per cent., and the volume of tonnage by 238 per cent. There were other signs of prosperity—new exports, such as timber for American shipyards, more manufactured goods in proportion to agricultural products, new types of ships, more foreign ships, and more foreign merchants at Seville. And the whole trade now enjoyed more efficient protection, for the convoy system was finally perfected in 1564. The revival began slowly, and it was not until 1566–70 that the volume of trade characteristic of 1546–50 was attained. Nevertheless, the conditions in which expansion could begin were already operating. For a brief period after the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559), Spain was at peace. Although the seamen of the west coast of France continued to wage war on Spanish shipping almost independently of their government's policy, France herself was weakened by the wars of religion, while Spain was free from heavy military commitments until the war with the Turk in 1571 and the renewed outbreak in the Low Countries in 1572. In the Caribbean, it is true, Hawkins was probing Spanish trade and defences from 1562, but it was another ten years before Drake made his spectacular and much more ominous assault on Panama. Meanwhile, the main lines of conquest and occupation had been accomplished, and the settling and internal development of the colonies could proceed apace. Shortly before 1560 German methods of silver production by amalgamation with mercury were adapted to the mines of New Spain, with marked improvement in production; and from the time the Huancavelica mercury mine went into operation, especially from 1576, Potosí had a local source of this vital commodity, and Peru began to furnish proportionately more metal even than New Spain.[51] The rapidly increasing output of the silver mines, with consequent renewed demand for European commodities and renewed flow of treasure to Spain, promoted the second long period of expansion, by inducing merchants to invest in trade. The investments were particularly lucrative in manufactured goods, which continued to replace agricultural products in the holds of the galleons. Other sectors of the Spanish economy benefited from the new boom, especially the Biscayan shipyards, for it was they and not their foreign rivals who supplied most of the vessels for the

[50] *Ibid.*, viii. 2, 1, pp. 261–344.

[51] G. Lohmann Villena, *Las minas de Huancavelica en los siglos XVI y XVII* (Seville, 1952), pp. 452–53.

Indies trade. Finally, there was a marked rise in prices, at once a result and a cause of more intensive trade.

Yet progress was not without its setbacks. The organisation of convoys, made necessary by the shortage of pilots and the needs of security, was itself an obstacle, for the convoys and their escorts had to be paid for by the trade, while they also prevented ships from being used economically by immobilising them for long periods and restricting the returns on the capital invested in them.[52] But the greatest problems arose outside the trade. The expeditions and devastating raids of Hawkins and Drake opened a new era in the Spanish Atlantic. Their effects cannot be gauged simply by the losses suffered by Spanish trade and shipping, for these were relatively small; even Drake's sensational descent on Panama in 1572 caused losses of only one-twentieth of the annual value of exports from Spain to the Indies.[53] But though the prizes gained and the destruction wrought by the English enemy were insignificant, the creation of insecurity, especially on the important Pacific route from Callao to Panama, was enormous. For Drake was not only a pirate; he was also a national enemy striking at strategic positions within the imperial economy, and the subsequent loss of confidence among Spanish merchants was profound. Meanwhile, the extension of Spain's commitments in Europe prevented her from putting a total effort into imperial defence. The war against the Turk culminating in Lepanto (1571) claimed many of the smaller vessels which had previously operated in the Indies fleets, and gave shippers an incentive to keep their vessels in America rather than expose them on the Guadalquivir to royal demands. Financial demands were even heavier, and merchants ran an even greater risk of having their treasure sequestered in order to pay for the campaign in the Mediterranean or the army in the Low Countries. Thus they had powerful motives for keeping their cargoes and their treasure in the Indies as well as their vessels. Hampered by the demands of its government and the threats of its enemies, the Indies trade was also hit by conditions within America itself. The epidemic of 1576 in New Spain wiped out 40–50 per cent. of the Indian population and greatly depleted the labour force.[54] The Mexican quota of precious metals fell from 61 per cent. (1571–75) to 35 per cent. (1581–85), and trade with New Spain suffered accordingly.

But the Indies trade had its own resilience, and there was a further upswing from 1578, with years of great prosperity between 1584 and 1586. Compared to 114 ships engaged in 1576 there were 213 in 1586, and an

[52] Chaunu, *op. cit.*, viii. 2, 1, pp. 436–41.
[53] *Ibid.*, viii. 2, 1, pp. 514–15.
[54] W. Borah, *New Spain's Century of Depression* (Berkeley, 1953), 18–19; Chaunu, *op. cit.*, viii. 2, 1, pp. 518–19, 560–63.

increase in the volume of trade by 50 per cent.[55] At the same time the most decisive progress yet made in the import of precious metals took place between the half decades 1576–80 and 1581–85, and was immediately reflected in the rise of Andalusian prices by 18 per cent. in the six years from 1576 to 1582.[56] Conditions in this period, especially between 1582 and 1585, were most favourable to commercial expansion. The union of the two crowns of Spain and Portugal provided an additional base in the Azores and thus greater security for imperial communications, at a time when the convoy system itself was beginning to work more efficiently and with quicker rotations. The relative military calm between the relaxation of Huguenot pressure from France and the beginning of real war with England gave Spain a breathing space which she used to great effect. Trade and treasure multiplied, and it was in these years that Spain earned the great surpluses which financed the Armada and its rapid replacement. The convoy for New Spain in 1585 was one of the record convoys in the entire history of the Indies trade—51 vessels, 17,000 *toneladas*—in a year when Spain had many other commitments and could not relax her defences against Drake.[57] In spite of the danger, merchants were investing capital in the high price years of 1582–84 in further trade, tempted by the recovery of the Mexican market.

But expansion was never limitless, and the reckoning came from 1587. Excess of exportation during years of prosperity brought its own reaction in a glutting of the market both in Spain and America. Again, however, the greatest obstacle came from without. The mounting action of the English offensive from 1585 to 1589 struck again at the security of Spain's interests and the confidence of her merchants. This could be seen in the greater number of warships used for escorting the convoys and of *avisos* for the transmission of news and directions. Drake's raid on Cadiz in April 1587, when he caught and destroyed the New Spain fleet in port itself, not only reduced the stock of vessels available but also demolished their cargoes; in one blow he struck at the state and the trade, prevented the departure of a convoy, and caused such panic among Seville merchants and shippers that they hesitated to invest further. The last line of defence was now the Spanish Armada, and in this they placed all their hopes. Consequently, there was a pause in the Indies trade while they awaited the success of Spain's great enterprise. The Armada had already absorbed a great portion of Spanish shipping. This was justified on the ground that it was designed to serve not only the needs of the state but also of those merchants whose interests English policy so grievously damaged. As the defence of the Indies was at stake, it

[55] Chaunu, *op. cit.*, viii. 2, 1, pp. 585–88.
[56] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 107–08.
[57] Chaunu, *op. cit.*, viii. 2, 1, pp. 726–28. See above, p. 153.

was logical that the powerful Indies fleets should be thrown into the assault; indeed, they furnished the major part of the invasion force, which accounts for the predominance of huge vessels in the Armada. More than this, the Indies trade supplied most of the personnel for the English campaign, either directly by levies in the ports of the Guadalquivir, as in the case of the escort fleet of Diego Flores de Valdés which was diverted from its journey to Tierra Firme in 1588 to join the Armada, or indirectly by levies among the reserves of Biscay, the nursery of Spanish seamen, which supplied most of the manpower on the American run.

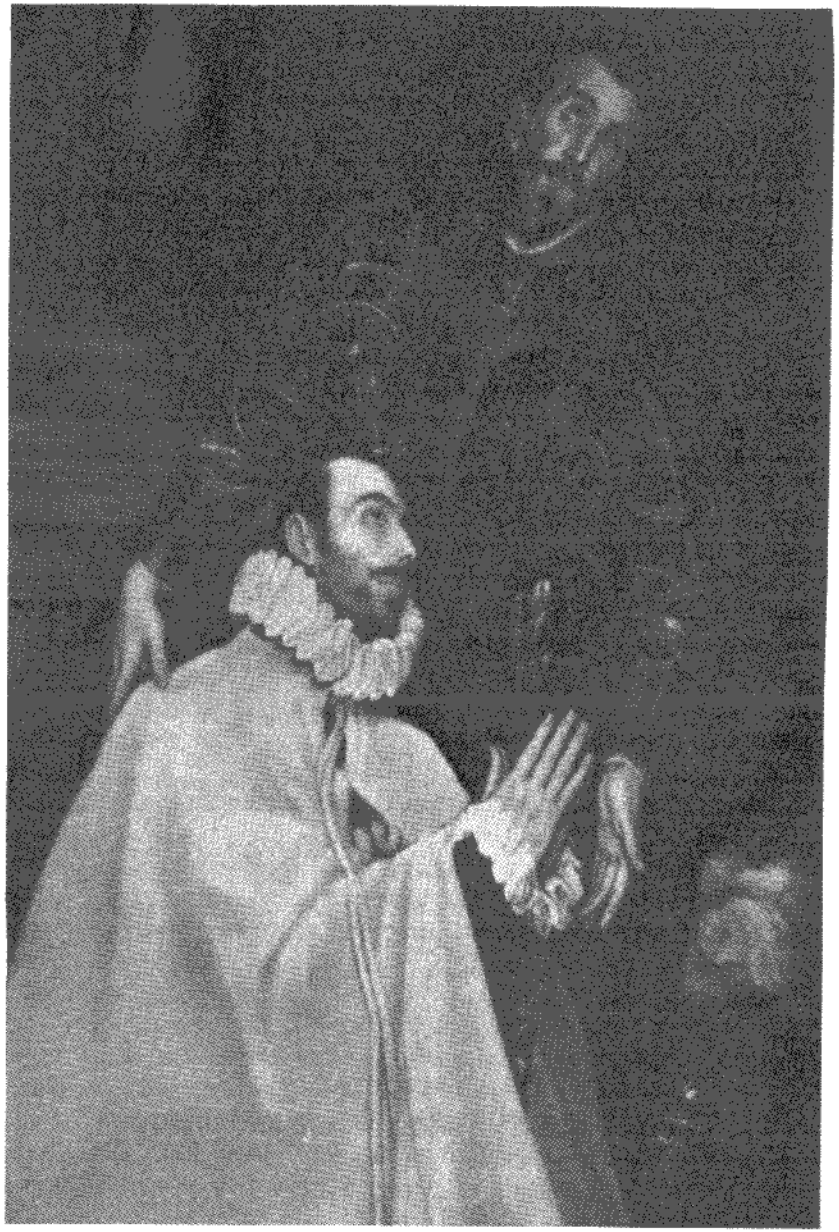
The Indies trade, therefore, had the greatest stake in the Spanish Armada. Its men, its ships, its vital interests, all were involved. Inevitably, the subsequent disaster was a shattering blow to its confidence and its prosperity. Shipping losses alone were damaging. Out of an Atlantic fleet of 100,000 tons, the losses of 1588 amounted to 50 per cent.; counting those in Cadiz of the previous year, they reached 60 per cent.[58] The Indies trade felt the impact more than any other section of the Spanish economy, not only because of the number of ships it had committed to the campaign but because they were its biggest, youngest, and best ships—precisely those on which it had relied so much. Even more grievous were the human losses. Of the 8,000 officers and men who sailed, very few returned to active service. With her many overseas commitments, Spain was already short of seamen, and it took much longer to make a good seaman than to build a ship. These disasters had an immediate effect on the Indies trade. The demands of the Armada and then its losses prevented normal fleet sailings, and from October 1586 to March 1589 no convoy left for Tierra Firme. The break in the seasonal rhythm of sailings raised the incidence of shipwreck due to hasty or late departures from the Indies. In the early 1590's the ships available for the Atlantic crossing were so old and so small that merchants hesitated to commit their goods to them, especially in view of their exposure to English privateers.[59] Shortage of ships and of manpower raised freightage rates and added to the burdens the trade had to carry. Seamen, conscious of their strength, were demanding higher wages and heavy advances, and refusing to sign until the very moment of departure. Meanwhile the war continued to depress trade, as merchants preferred to leave their returns in the Indies out of reach of English privateers and of their own government—a useful safety device but one which caused private treasure imports to drop. All these difficulties had their origin in the English offensive, and the abrupt rise in the rate of the *avería*, from 1·7 per cent. in 1585 to 8 per cent. in 1591 reflected an enormous

[58] *Ibid.*, viii. 2, 1, p. 769.
[59] *Ibid.*, iii. pp. 398–400, 412–13, 437 n. 59, 420 n. 10; vi. tables 200 and 201; on shortage of seamen and rise of wages see iii. p. 420; viii. 2, 1, pp. 795–96.

increase in the costs of defence, and thus in the overheads of trade. The destruction of the New Spain fleet in Cadiz in 1587 and of the armed escort which was swallowed up in the Armada of 1588 were particularly ominous for the *avería*, especially as they coincided with the period when the campaign against England depleted the Spanish fleets, when the demands of the Indies weighed heavily on Spanish shipping, and when mounting costs made ships as expensive as they were rare.

Yet all was not lost. Indeed, the most remarkable event of these years was not the disaster to the Armada but the rapidity with which Spain recovered from it. Drawing on the resources accumulated in more prosperous years, especially in the first half of the decade, she began to fight back, and to give yet further proof of her immense staying power. The state itself led the revival, anxious for its own treasure supplies. Expert engineers were sent to reorganise fortifications in the Indies. In the absence of regular armed convoys, the government, at its own expense, devised a new method of transporting treasure and valuable goods—in small squadrons of *zabras*, those extremely rapid frigates which were capable of outstripping most pursuers.[60] The system was first adopted in 1588, was renewed in 1589 and 1590, and then prolonged until 1592. But the whole of the Indies trade reacted rigorously to the emergency. New vessels were rapidly built in Spanish shipyards, and old ones were retained beyond their normal life. Smaller ships than were usual on the American run were pushed into service. Convoys and their armed escorts were reconstituted from as early as 1590, an amazing recovery by any standards. Some of the signs of the revival were ominous, it is true; attracted by the high freight prices and by Spain's need to relax her regulations in order to procure shipping, many foreign vessels, most of them from northern Europe, entered the Indies trade, and their proportion rose from 5·9 per cent. of the total shipping in 1579–87 to 21·25 per cent. in 1588–92.[61] But this development was not yet beyond control, and Spain continued to monopolise the greater part of the returns. By 1592 the worst was over, and the Indies trade could return to its normal rhythm and methods, with regular fleet sailings and vast receipts of treasure. From the wreckage of the Armada, therefore, Spain salvaged much more than a few vessels. She preserved her richest possession and continued to exploit it remorselessly.

[60] *Ibid.*, iii. pp. 412, 437 n. 59, 450, 468. See above, p. 167.
[61] *Ibid.*, viii. 2, 1, pp. 772–73.



Julián Romero, commander of Spanish tercios by El Greco

CHAPTER VI

PHILIP II AND THE GOVERNMENT OF SPAIN

1. Peace and Recovery

Philip II, whom tradition encloisters in the Escorial directing the forces of the Counter-Reformation, began his reign far from Spain and at war with the pope. Left by his father in the Low Countries in 1556, it took him three years to liquidate the sorry remnants of the emperor's affairs beyond the Pyrenees and to extricate himself from the old quarrels with the old enemies. Political and jurisdictional disputes with Paul IV in Italy suddenly erupted into war in September 1556; Henry II of France automatically seized the opportunity to strike at his Habsburg enemy, and so within a year of his accession Philip was confronted by a Franco-papal alliance—the recurrent nightmare of his father—and a war on two fronts. The military operations followed the pattern of stalemate characteristic of the entire Habsburg–Valois conflict, as the two exhausted and bankrupt powers went through the clumsy motions of attack and counter-attack. Philip won the battle of St. Quentin, and the French took Calais from his English allies. Had anything changed in forty years?

If old prejudices remained, circumstances were rendering them increasingly outmoded. By September 1557 the veteran Paul IV realised he was out of his depth and, besieged in his own states by the Duke of Alba, withdrew from the war. On 21 September 1558 Charles V died at Yuste, and Philip was now urgently required in Spain. On 17 November Philip's wife, Mary Tudor, died, and the union of England and Spain, so ominous for France, was abruptly dissolved. By this time both France and Spain had learnt the folly of fighting a useless war on ever-worsening credit, and were ready to come to terms. These were signed in the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis on 2–3 April 1559. The settlement was neither a triumph for Spain nor a disaster for France, but simply reflected the existing balance of power in Europe, confirming Spain's hegemony in the south and her weakness in the north. France virtually abandoned her aspirations in Italy, not only by restoring Savoy and Piedmont to their duke and thus sanctioning a barrier against future intervention south of the Alps, but also by relinquishing Corsica and thereby depriving herself of one of the key strategic positions

between Spain and Italy in the Mediterranean. But France had not lost all. Her withdrawal from a policy of military extravagance abroad enabled her to concentrate on national interests, and these she advanced by recovering Calais and retaining Metz, Toul, and Verdun; in this way she threw Spain's English ally out of France and preserved her own conquests in the north-east, conquests which were an obstacle to communications between the Spanish dominions of Franche-Comté and the Low Countries. France could still not feel secure while Spain was installed in the Low Countries with an English ally across the Channel. But the marriage of the Dauphin to Mary Stuart in 1558 threatened to enclose England within the Auld Alliance and to isolate the Low Countries still further.

England was equally important to Spain. Charles V had staked the security of the Low Countries on the English alliance and had expressed his wish 'that at all costs England and the Low Countries should be bound together, so that they can provide each other with mutual aid against their enemies'.[1] Philip II tried his utmost to salvage what he could from this policy, and before he reached a settlement with France he waged an intense diplomatic campaign to keep the English base in his hands. But circumstances were against him. The fall of Calais ruined the little reputation he still possessed in England, while the death of his wife severed the formal ties of alliance. In desperation he then tried to marry Elizabeth, but she was elusive and noncommittal, and it took Philip about two months to realise that she had no intention of marrying him. In default of England he turned to France, and the peace treaty was concluded with a marriage alliance. In June 1559 Philip married by proxy his child-bride, Elizabeth of Valois, eldest daughter of the king of France. In this way he brought to a close the policy of his father. Germany had long been irretrievably lost; now the dream of an Anglo-Flemish state bestriding the Channel was shattered, and Philip inherited the burden of the Low Countries without the English base to sustain it. He did not yet despair of England, as can be seen in the diplomatic support he gave to Elizabeth against France and against the papacy. But his own empire was thrown back unmistakably on Spain, away from the north to the south of Europe, and the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis, in reinforcing Spain's grip on Italy, only completed the process.

There was something symbolic, therefore, in Philip's return to Spain in September 1559. From now on the king of Spain remained in the Iberian peninsula, surveying Europe from behind the Pyrenees. Spain, which had

[1] Quoted in M. Fernández Alvarez, *Tres Embajadores de Felipe II en Inglaterra* (Madrid, 1951), p. 21. See also the same author's 'La Paz de Cateau-Cambrésis', *Hispania*, xix. (1959), 530–44.

long been the treasury of the monarchy, now became the source and the inspiration of its policy. Henceforth, events were seen and judged from Spain, in a Spanish ambience, by Spanish personnel, and in Spanish interests. These were natural developments, not only because of Philip's own preferences but also because he could not govern his empire without Spain and he could not govern Spain without residing there. The Regent, the Councils, the cortes, his officials, all were anxious to have him back. In the monarch's absence seigneurial independence always tended to increase, while officials found it more difficult to apply the royal writ. Social and political tensions were aggravated by a religious crisis, and one of the first public functions which Philip attended was an *auto de fe* in Valladolid. But his greatest problem was yet another legacy from his father—the economic effects of prolonged warfare. Spain had escaped the direct blows of war, but she had supplied the lion's share of men, money, and ships. Ordinary and extraordinary revenue had long since been spent; during the war against Paul IV, Philip had to extort money from Spanish prelates, while treasure from America was not inexhaustible. Philip was forced to make peace, and in the final analysis the imperial policy of Charles V was liquidated by the Spanish state bankruptcy of 1557.

Financial reasons, then, forced Philip to return to Spain and to stay there. One after the other the peripheral states of the empire had refused, not always tacitly, to supply him with subsidies. Sicily, Naples, Milan, the Low Countries, all were unwilling to contribute to imperial defence when their own interests were not involved, and their experience of Charles V's rule had taught them that this was most of the time. Their refusal to recognise the empire as a financial unit reflected the nature of the organisation to which they belonged. The component parts of Philip II's empire continued the separate relationship with their common sovereign which had been characteristic of Charles V's reign, and there was no possibility of Philip imposing a central organisation on them even if he had wanted to. But he did wish to tax them, and their reluctance to contribute was something which he could never overcome. In the Mediterranean, it is true, Spanish imperial interests coincided with the local interests of Naples and Sicily, and consequently during times of danger from the Turk or the corsairs Philip II could count on the material co-operation of Sicily and Naples. But the Mediterranean states were indifferent to his interests in northern Europe and in the 1580's, when those interests became paramount, they declined to collaborate beyond their own needs. The king appreciated their point of view, but he also believed that the resources of his states should be shared for the benefit of which ever was in most need of them. In 1589 he told the Council of Italy: 'Except in the most urgent cases, it is not the

custom to transfer the burdens of one kingdom to another. And since God has entrusted me with so many (kingdoms), since all are in my charge, and since in the defence of one all are preserved, it is just that all should help me. . . .'[2] But his view could not overcome the concern of each state for its financial independence or the suspicion that the cases of emergency were permanent and usually those of Spain.

If Sicily objected because the cause was not her own, the Low Countries objected because they believed the cause was positively harmful to their interests, and because they were obliged to fulfil a rôle in northern Europe which they could not afford. Philip II had personal experience of the Low Countries from 1555 to 1559, and during these years he survived not on local subsidies but on the financial help he received from Spain. 'I will gain nothing by staying here', he wrote to Granvelle in June 1559, 'except lose myself and these states. . . . The best thing that can be done is for all of us to seek the remedy, as I will do as far as possible, and if the remedy is not here then I will go to seek it in Spain.'[3] For it was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain revenue from Spain at a distance; his presence was required there in order to sanction the collection of subsidies by his own immediate authority. When he reached Spain, however, he found that the costs of war which had gone on for too long had brought his finances even there to the verge of disaster. From Toledo he wrote to Granvelle in December 1559: 'Believe me, I am anxious to provide the Low Countries with everything I know they need. . . . But I give you my word that I have found here a situation worse than that there, so that it is impossible for me to help you, or even to provide here for needs so small that you would be astonished if you could see. I confess that when I was in the Low Countries I never thought that things could be like this, and for these reasons I have not found any remedy outside the money of the dowry. . . .'[4]

Philip II's first major task, therefore, was to restore his finances.[5] This forced him to settle in Spain, impose his authority, and withdraw from the widespread commitments of his father. In the process the empire he ruled changed, not in size but in character. Less ecumenical than that of Charles V, it was also more solid, firmly based in the peninsula, and essentially Spanish in character. Philip II was first and foremost king of Spain. That was what Spaniards wanted.

[2] H. G. Koenigsberger, *The Government of Sicily under Philip II of Spain* (London, 1951), pp. 55–56.
[3] C. Weiss, ed., *Papiers d'état du Cardinal de Granvelle* (9 vols., Paris, 1841–52), v. 606.
[4] *Ibid.*, v. 672.
[5] Financial policy and conditions are treated above, pp. 136–42.

2. 'The Perfect Master in the Art of Ruling'

The reputation of Philip II, more perhaps than that of most great rulers, has suffered from extremes of eulogy and disparagement. His apologists have seen him as a Catholic crusader, his critics as a reactionary bigot. Neither view is realistic; the first ignores his constant concern for national interests, the second implies that he was wrong not to be a democrat and a Protestant.[6] Contemporary observers found him equally difficult to understand—a solitary and secretive figure, who spoke in a low voice, stroking his pointed beard, with a thin smile that cut like a sword, as Antonio Pérez recalled. Few people broke through the barrier of his reserve. Ambassadors and suitors he received with courtesy, listening to their requests, but staring at them disconcertingly and replying so softly as to be often unintelligible; and he never spoke of himself. People became anxious and speechless as they faced him, overwhelmed not only by his power but also by his presence. Yet his Castilian subjects loved him with a blind affection and with an implicit confidence in his judgement and integrity, sensing perhaps beneath the mask of sovereignty the human character of their king.

For human he was. His early education had been entrusted to Juan Martínez Siliceo, bishop of Cartagena, who taught him little more than ecclesiastical Latin and whose indulgence was responsible for Philip's notorious weakness in any language except Spanish.[7] A more systematic and disciplined education was provided by his next tutor, Juan de Zúñiga, grand-commander of Castile, a man of scrupulous piety and morals, closely connected with the Jesuits like all the Requesens family. Under Zúñiga's influence the prince acquired a seriousness which never left him, but he had his share of human failings, and these his tutor reported frankly to the emperor. Certainly in his youth Philip caused his father some concern. In 1543, shortly after his son's first marriage, Charles was worried about his lethargy, his coolness towards his wife, and his apparent lack of religious devotion. But this was just a passing crisis, reflecting a reaction against

[6] For these reasons few of the general biographies of Philip II are satisfactory. Some of these are reviewed in R. B. Merriman, *The Rise of the Spanish Empire in the Old World and the New*, vol. iv., *The Prudent King*, which is itself one of the two outstanding modern works on the reign; the other is F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philip II*, frequently referred to in these pages. For the interpretation of a modern Spanish scholar see M. Fernández, Alvarez, *Felipe II. Semblanza del Rey Prudente* (Madrid, 1956). L. Fernández y Fernández de Retana, *España en tiempo de Felipe II*, in *Historia de España* edited by R. Menéndez Pidal, xix. (2 vols., Madrid, 1955) is a compendious narrative of events but otherwise disappointing. Recent works on Philip II and his entourage are surveyed in a useful and balanced review by H. Lapeyre, 'Autour de Philippe II', *Bulletin Hispanique*, lix. (1957), 152–75.
[7] The sources for the early life of Philip II are gathered in J. M. March, *Niñez y juventud de Felipe II (1527–1547)* (2 vols., Madrid, 1941–42).

authority which was natural in a young man of eighteen who probably resented being dragged in the wake of the emperor's policies; the attitude was to be seen even more clearly in the lack of grace with which he accepted his marriage to Mary Tudor. In other ways Philip remained strongly marked by the education he had received; from it he received his extensive knowledge of history, his appreciation of scholarship and the arts, and the early awakening of his political judgement.

Physically Philip II had few reserves. Fair-haired, of rather less than medium height, erect of carriage, his eyes permanently reddened from overwork, he did what he could to nurture his strength, especially by his austerity of life and careful sleeping habits, but his constitution was gradually weakened by asthma, stone, and gout. His resources of mind and spirit, however, were immense. Emotionally he was completely attuned to the exercise of power, and by any standards his sang-froid was phenomenal. He was always master of himself, never showed his feelings, and never panicked; he took the disaster of the Armada with the same equanimity as the triumph of Lepanto, and the occasions on which he was seen to be moved were rare, such as the death of his third wife, Elizabeth of Valois, or the completion of the Escorial. Yet he was far from insensitive; he had a cool head but not a cold heart. To his family he was utterly devoted, and the famous letters he sent from Portugal to his young daughters between 1581 and 1583 reveal a Philip II who is simple, tender, solicitous, a good father, who eats too many melons and misses the song of the nightingales at Aranjuez.[8] If contemporary gossip is to be believed his married life was not entirely blameless. In his youth he was credited with an affair with Isabel Ossorio, lady-in-waiting to the empress; at the time of his stay in England and the Low Countries other adventures were attributed to him; after his return to Spain he was supposed to have had a liaison with Eufrasia de Guzmán, lady-in-waiting to the Princess Joanna, and the correspondence of the French ambassadors in 1561 and 1564 seems to confirm that he was not always faithful to Elizabeth of Valois.[9] But the subject is popular and the evidence suspect, and in default of proof the prudent king should be left with the benefit of the doubt.

The sincerity of his religious life could hardly be questioned; his conscience was scrupulous, his beliefs firmly based and carefully practised. And he probably placed more confidence in his confessors and theologians than he did in his ministers and officials. The affairs of the church were his daily

[8] L. P. Gachard, ed., *Lettres de Philippe II à ses filles les Infantes Isabelle et Catherine écrites pendant son voyage en Portugal (1581–1583)* (Paris, 1884).

[9] A. Gonzáles de Amezúa y Mayo, *Isabel de Valois, reina de España (1546–1568)* (3 vols., Madrid, 1949), a work which is also valuable for the study of Philip II, his court and his foreign policy.

concern, and he was known to be a friend of reform. St. Teresa wrote of him, 'Don Philip is very well disposed to religious who are known to keep their Rule, and will always help them'.[10] He also recognised sanctity when he saw it, and he was anxious to secure for his library original manuscripts of St. Teresa's own works. This religious feeling combined with his taste for literature, art, and science, gave birth to the greatest architectural monument of his reign, the monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial. Philip was fond of Madrid, and it was he who made it the capital of Spain, formally establishing his court there in 1561. But he also required a place of retreat, outside of Madrid yet accessible. The Escorial originated as a mausoleum for the remains of Charles V, but from the beginning Philip incorporated in it a royal residence with a monastery and a church. Begun soon after the capital had been established at Madrid, it took twenty years to build and was the king's dearest possession; during the process of construction one of his few relaxations was to sit and watch it rising among the lonely hills of the Guadarramas about twenty miles to the north-west of Madrid, its grey stone, hewn from nearby quarries, merging perfectly with the landscape. There he could go into retreat among the Hieronymite monks, attend Mass from his own austere room, and collect his Titians and Tintorettos, his rare books and precious manuscripts, procured with a scholar's enthusiasm from agents in all parts of Europe. Yet Philip II was not permanently enclosed within the walls of the Escorial; that is a legend. When it was necessary he travelled extensively in the peninsula, and he only took his court to the Escorial for a brief period during the summer. But it was his favourite residence, a place to which he could frequently retire for peace of mind and soul and for the best conditions of work, living at the same time in the atmosphere of a monastery.

Religion pervaded all aspects of Philip II's life and work.[11] In making political decisions which affected his own conscience he invariably consulted his religious advisers, and while it is difficult to pierce the secrecy of these matters it is also difficult to avoid the conclusion that they must share the responsibility for some of the more sinister actions of their sovereign. One of the essential features of his character was his high sense of justice and his concern for the impartial administration of law. But he also believed that his sovereignty gave him the right to execute private and secret justice, beyond the cognisance of any authority except God. This belief led him to acts of savage and arbitrary despotism, performed with a complacency which seems to have come from the concurrence of his theologians.

[10] *The Complete Works of St. Teresa of Jesus*, trans. and ed., E. Allison Peers (3 vols., London, 1946), iii. 142.

[11] See above, pp. 117–19, and below, pp. 251–86.

Perhaps the most brutal example of such behaviour was his action in the case of Baron de Montigny, representative of Egmont and Hornes in Spain and condemned to death by the Duke of Alba for rebellion in the Low Countries. Montigny was executed secretly in the castle of Simancas in October 1570, for Philip II decided that it would be better to strangle him quietly in order to avoid the repercussions which his execution would produce in the Low Countries and in Europe generally. Therefore the official version, prepared by the king himself, was that Montigny died a natural death. 'The affair went so well', he wrote to Alba on 3 November, 'that till now everyone has believed that he died of illness. And this must be given out there too, by discreetly showing round two letters coming from here.'[12] This kind of mentality Philip shared with other sovereigns of the time, but the distinguishing feature of his behaviour is the lengths to which he went for the satisfaction of his conscience. In this case the Dominican theologian, Hernando del Castillo, was expressly chosen by the king to be present at the last moments of Montigny, and although he seems to have disapproved of the whole business he nevertheless collaborated.

Sovereignty, of course, could be used to justify almost any royal action, and Philip's own sense of prerogative was highly developed. With it went a notion of personal duty and responsibility which made him the most hard-working monarch in history. He ruled his empire sitting at his desk, receiving his endless correspondence from all parts of the world, reading, annotating, replying, and insisting always on seeing everything himself. This was partly because of an ingrained inability to trust anyone. His father had already warned him not to give himself to any of his entourage, but Philip's distrust of his subordinates went much deeper than this. He particularly distrusted the strong: the Duke of Alba, the Marquis of Santa Cruz, Don John of Austria, and Alexander Farnese, and preferred to give his confidence to lesser personalities like Ruy Gómez, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and his secretary Mateo Vázquez. It has been argued that this attitude betrayed a sense of inferiority and a lack of confidence in himself, to compensate for which he surrounded himself by impenetrable barriers of reserve and solemnity and erected mistrust into a system of government. Even Philip's virtues are seen as an expression of weakness. His excessive industry, for example, has been interpreted as a way of escaping from the political and personal anxieties which tormented him, and his proverbial prudence as irresolution.[13] Persons as diverse as Gonzalo Pérez, Don John

[12] *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, ed. M. Fernández de Navarrete, etc. (Madrid, 1842–1931), iv. 565.

[13] G. Marañón, *Antonio Pérez (el hombre, el drama, la época)* (6th edn., 2 vols., Madrid, 1958), i. 41–51.

of Austria, and Luis de Requesens, all complained of his slowness, and Pius V wrote to him that 'Your Majesty spends so long considering your undertakings that when the moment to perform them comes, the occasion has passed and the money all been spent'. Even his confessor, Fr. Chaves, who connived at so much in his sovereign's politics, reproved him in later years for not doing justice more speedily and threatened to withhold absolution from him for not coming to a decision on the charge of peculation against his minister, the Count of Barajas.

All this may be true, but it is only half the story. The character of Philip II should not be judged in isolation from the conditions which confronted him. It was natural that he should distrust the more powerful of his subjects and prevent the crown from becoming a cipher in the hands of the aristocracy, as it had been less than a century before and was to become again under his immediate successors. Any self-respecting monarch would have done the same. And if he also withheld responsibility from his weaker subordinates that was not simply because he distrusted them—in some cases he had reason to—but also because he believed that his own judgement was best—as it usually was—and that it was his duty to give it. To this extent, and in view of the vast information at his disposal and his own tenacious memory, his attitude was plausible. He was a professional monarch doing his job. And it was a difficult job, the most difficult one of any sovereign at the time. He had to govern an immense empire, formed of constituent kingdoms, which in an age of imperfect communications depending on horse and ship were effectively more extended and scattered than they would be today. His whole life was spent fighting against distances.[14] True, he himself added to the inevitable slowness of communications by his methods of working and the slowness of his decisions. But this slowness was to some extent calculated for he had to measure the distant repercussions of his acts. Once a decision had been taken and dispatched, it was difficult to revoke it for events were beyond his reach. Philip II was handicapped, therefore, less by his personality than by the nature of his task; it was this which imposed most of his attitudes upon him. More impressive than his weakness was the way in which he faced up to his vast responsibilities. And one of the greatest of these was to provide an heir to the throne.

3. Don Carlos and the Succession Problem

Transfer of power from one sovereign to the next was never easy in the sixteenth century. Unless the monarch had an undisputed male heir,

[14] This has been best appreciated by Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 310–24.

competent to rule, there was likely to be trouble. And in Spain mortality lay heavy on the royal family, ever since Ferdinand and Isabella had lost so many of their children. Philip II, whose own accession was exceptionally free of complications, found it less easy to provide for his successor. His first wife, Maria of Portugal, he married in 1543 when he was only sixteen; within two years she had died in bearing him the Infante Don Carlos, whose own grasp on life was precarious. Nine years later he married Mary Tudor; but the union, undertaken for his father's reasons of state, was barren of children and, on Philip's side, of love. His third marriage in 1559 was also a diplomatic arrangement, but Philip grew to love Elizabeth of Valois and to cherish her dearly; yet it was seven years before she bore him a child, and this was a daughter, Isabella Clara Eugenia, who with her younger sister Catherine was the joy of Philip's life. But, after less than ten years of married life with her husband, Elizabeth died in October 1568. Her death had been preceded in the same year by that of the Infante Don Carlos. These personal bereavements were also political problems for Philip II; at the age of forty-one he was a widower again and without a male heir. Yet now his anxiety was small indeed compared to that which he had felt when his son and heir was alive.[15]

When Philip returned to Spain in 1559 Don Carlos was fourteen and had spent his youth without sight of his father. His grandfather, Charles V, appalled by his appearance and his temperament, disliked him on sight and refused to have him at Yuste. His tutors, García de Toledo and the humanist, Honorato Juan, found him hardly more prepossessing, and the latter confided to Philip his belief that the boy was going mad. His unpropitious heredity was against him from the start. His father and mother were cousins, and both were grandchildren of Joanna the Mad. The results of such inbreeding, common in the house of Habsburg, were seen perhaps in the grotesque form of Don Carlos, whose frail body could hardly support his overgrown head and who was further handicapped by recurrent fevers and a permanent stammer; by all accounts Philip II had begotten a son who was mentally and physically abnormal. In 1560, however, the cortes of Castile recognised Don Carlos as heir to the throne, and Philip made provision for his education and upbringing. His adolescent years were spent at Alcalá in the company of Don John of Austria and Alexander Farnese, but the university which produced so many distinguished alumni could make no impression on the retarded mind of Philip II's son. Only a kind of cunning emerged:

[15] For modern Spanish views on the controversial story of Don Carlos see E. Tormo, 'La tragedia del príncipe don Carlos y la trágica grandeza de Felipe II', *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, cxii. (1943), 161–209, and the article 'Don Carlos' by P. Aguado Bleye, in *Diccionario de Historia de España* (2 vols., Madrid, 1952), i.

in spite of the close watch on his behaviour ordered by his father he managed to evade his guardians in order to seek the company of a young girl, the daughter of a palace servant. In one of these escapades he fell down some stairs and seriously injured his head. Philip hastened to Alcalá with a doctor who performed the operation of trepanning, a treatment which the prince successfully survived. In 1562, after his recovery, the king took him back to Madrid and in the hope of leading him towards responsibility made him President of the Council of State, whose sessions the prince began to attend. His conduct only grew more erratic. Now his fellow councillors, the élite of church and state, were the targets of his temper and obstinacy, his anxiety to hurt and insult, while his political indiscretion became notorious. The question of his marriage had to be raised, and Philip toyed with the idea of trying to marry him to Mary Stuart, but soon dropped it. In any case, should he be allowed to marry at all? Philip II began to doubt it. Don Carlos also wanted to become governor of the Low Countries, as his father had promised the States General in 1559. But in view of his political incapacity, the Low Countries in the 1560's were the last place he could be sent to. Frustration only made the prince worse; openly and sarcastically he began to criticise his father, believing he denied him office and affection without any reason. And at the same time he was indulging in acts of wanton violence and sadism, some of which, like his ordering young girls to be beaten, were clear signs of sexual perversion.

The conduct of Don Carlos, which at first affected only his immediate entourage, assumed a more sinister aspect in the political context of 1567. The situation in the Low Countries was reaching a climax, and Philip II decided that the only remedy was to send the Duke of Alba on a mission of repression. One of the rebel leaders, the Count of Egmont, had been in Madrid between January and April 1565, and directly or indirectly had established contact with Don Carlos, who was then making his first deranged plans to escape to the Low Countries and try his luck there. But the prince confided his scheme to the Prince of Eboli, the most loyal of Philip II's ministers, who immediately informed his master. Philip simply noted the information. In June 1566 the Baron de Montigny arrived in Madrid to represent the interests of the rebel leaders, Egmont and Hornes; and when, in September of the following year, the Duke of Alba reported from Brussels that he had imprisoned the latter, Philip II seized their agent and executed him three years later, as has been seen. Montigny, too, had been in touch with Don Carlos. By 1567 the prince had formed another plan to escape to the Low Countries and he asked Eboli to give him 200,000 ducats for the purpose. Again Philip was informed and again he withheld his hand. Don Carlos then wrote letters to various grandees, asking

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their help for a great enterprise he was planning. Inevitably the king soon knew of this too. Finally, the prince asked Don John of Austria, recently appointed captain-general of the sea, to take him to Italy, promising him Naples and Milan when his cause triumphed. Don John reported the matter to the king.

By this time Philip had decided what he had to do. As a matter of duty he could not contemplate the crown going to a man who was patently unfit to rule, and would lead the monarchy back to the condition from which it had been rescued by the Catholic Monarchs. It was equally important to prevent him from marrying and having an heir, from whom little better might be expected. There were only two remedies—perpetual confinement or death. On the night of the eighteenth of January 1568, with three councillors and a detachment of guards, he entered the bedroom of his son in the Alcázar of Madrid. Don Carlos awoke, confused, and seeing his father asked if he had come to kill him. With his usual impassivity Philip II confiscated the prince's papers, put him under armed guard, and left the room. That was the last time he saw his son. While Don Carlos was in confinement Philip II communicated his decision to Cardinal Espinosa, the Prince of Eboli, and the prince's guard, the Duke of Feria, and he also asked the advice of some distinguished theologians, including Melchor Cano. Then, before he began to prepare more suitable accommodation, he gave instructions about the régime to be observed for his son in his small prison in the Alcázar. There Don Carlos died on 25 July 1568 in circumstances still unknown.

If Philip II ordered the execution of his son, it would not be out of character, for he believed the fate of the monarchy was at stake, and he also believed that he had the right of private judgement and execution, as the case of Montigny was to show. But it is not known that he did so. The various opinions on the death of Don Carlos—that his death was ordered by his father and took place by beheading, or by strangulation, or by poisoning, or that he died as a result of his own excesses in prison—all are speculation, for the evidence does not admit of certainty.[16] There is even less historical foundation for the literary and polemical interpretations of the case—that he was killed because of his sinful love for his stepmother, Elizabeth of Valois, or for his partiality to Protestantism, or because he connived at a vast 'international conspiracy' against Philip II. Even his nebulous schemes for escaping to the Low Countries or to Italy—all of them pathetically lacking in secrecy—must be considered as the outpourings of a disordered mind rather than a calculated plot to subvert the monarchy,

[16] For some of the evidence see *Documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, xxvii. 38–39.

of which he was palpably incapable. This is precisely how Philip II saw them.

Don Carlos had been accepted by the cortes as heir to the throne, and therefore his father felt obliged to justify his imprisonment. On the day after his arrest Philip II ordered his postmaster-general to place an embargo on all mail, and for two days no letter left the capital. Then, on 22 January, the king gave the world his official version, in letters to the pope, to his ambassadors, and to his officials. These messages confined themselves to the bare facts of the imprisonment, with an indication that his duty forced him to take this painful decision. Then, when rumours and scandal began to accumulate, he defended his action in more detail in confidential letters to those whose regard he valued. These need not be taken at their face value, but they give Philip II's point of view, which was the one traditionally neglected. The burden of all his explanations was that he had apprehended his son not because he had committed any crimes, much less as a punishment, but because his son could not be held responsible for his actions. In a private letter to the pope he specifically denied that his son was guilty of rebellion or heresy, and explained that the cause of his detention was

> not the passion nor the fault of the prince, nor any intention on my part to chastise or correct him, for if this had been my motive I would have taken other measures, without going to this extreme. . . . But since for my sins, it has been God's will that the prince should have such great and numerous defects, partly mental, partly due to his physical condition, utterly lacking as he is in the qualifications necessary for ruling, I saw the grave risks which would arise were he to be given the succession and the obvious dangers which would accrue; and therefore, after long and careful consideration and having tried every alternative in vain, it was clear that there was little or no prospect of his condition improving in time to prevent the evils which could reasonably be foreseen. In short, my decision was necessary.[17]

Philip II could never bring himself to use the word 'insane' in speaking of his own son, but he was aware of his condition, and he knew that it was his duty to detain him, partly in his son's own interests but above all to prevent his succeeding to the throne, and with the intention perhaps of disinheriting him. This he never needed to do, for his son died. The most likely explanation of his death may be found in his own excesses in confinement. He spoke of suicide, and he behaved as though he were attempting it; a brief hunger-strike was followed by a bout of gluttony, then massive consumption of ice, and the final break-down.

[17] Philip II to Pius V, 9 May 1568 in Fernández y Fernández de Retana, *España en tiempo de Felipe II*, i. 764–65.

The tragedy of Don Carlos was also the tragedy of Philip II. The year 1568 was a terrible year for the king, perhaps the worst of his reign. Amidst the political blows from the Low Countries and from Granada his personal grief struck him with savage intensity. He had now lost two wives and his only son, the latter in circumstances which soon unleashed a torrent of abuse all over Europe. Shortly afterwards his third and best-loved wife died, leaving him desolate. And he still had to provide for the succession. In November 1570 he married his fourth and last wife, Anne of Austria, the daughter of his cousin, the Emperor Maximilian II. Before her death ten years later she bore him four sons and one daughter; but of these only one survived childhood, and he was to succeed his father as Philip III. The king's love for his daughters, Isabella and Catherine, was that of a man clinging desperately to the last remnants of family life.

4. Absolute Monarchy: the Administration

Charles V had been a peripatetic emperor. Philip II was a national king. The difference was inevitably reflected in the working of the crown and its institutions. Theoretically Philip II was no more absolute than his father, and he continued the institutions he inherited as well as the constitutional autonomy of the component parts of his empire. But Spain, and in particular Castile, was now the metropolis, and the administration itself because more sedentary, rooted in Madrid. As Philip II did not visit his realms outside Spain he administered them through officials whose actions he controlled down to the minutest details. This presupposed that he kept in touch with them almost daily by letter, while his phenomenal memory and the constant reports he demanded of his ambassadors, viceroys, and local officials enabled him to know from his desk, not only political conditions but also the state of every town and diocese and even the curricula of the Spanish universities. This total information he shared with no one; each of his officials worked in his own department, dependent for information about the business of other departments on private sources of intelligence. Secrecy, and resultant suspicion and intrigues, permeated the entire administration, and one of the most frequent words used in official correspondence was the verb '*disimular*' which means 'to hide one's real intentions'. Even Philip's closest counsellors were informed only of limited areas of policy. Only the king had total knowledge, and he was the only co-ordinator.

Philip II preferred writing to talking. This was true even of his daily relations with his secretaries. Consequently he conducted a voluminous correspondence about correspondence—commenting upon dispatches and

giving instructions for their distribution, even correcting blemishes of grammar and taste in the writings of his subordinates. Inevitably he was always submerged beneath a mountain of papers, besieged by business from his councils and from private parties, and exhausted from audiences. There was hardly time for him to see the queen and his children, while the public results of this impractical system, whereby the king was virtually his own secretary and council combined, were only too apparent. 'We will see to all this tomorrow, for now I have neither the time nor the head for it.' 'I have a lot to send you from yesterday, but it is not possible now. I will do it tomorrow.'[18] Philip II's efforts were heroic and impressive, but he set himself an impossible task and utterly failed to discriminate between matters of policy and the routine business of administration, or between the important and the trivial. At the time he was preparing the Spanish Armada he was conducting a vigorous polemic with the pope on the state of clerical dress in Spain.

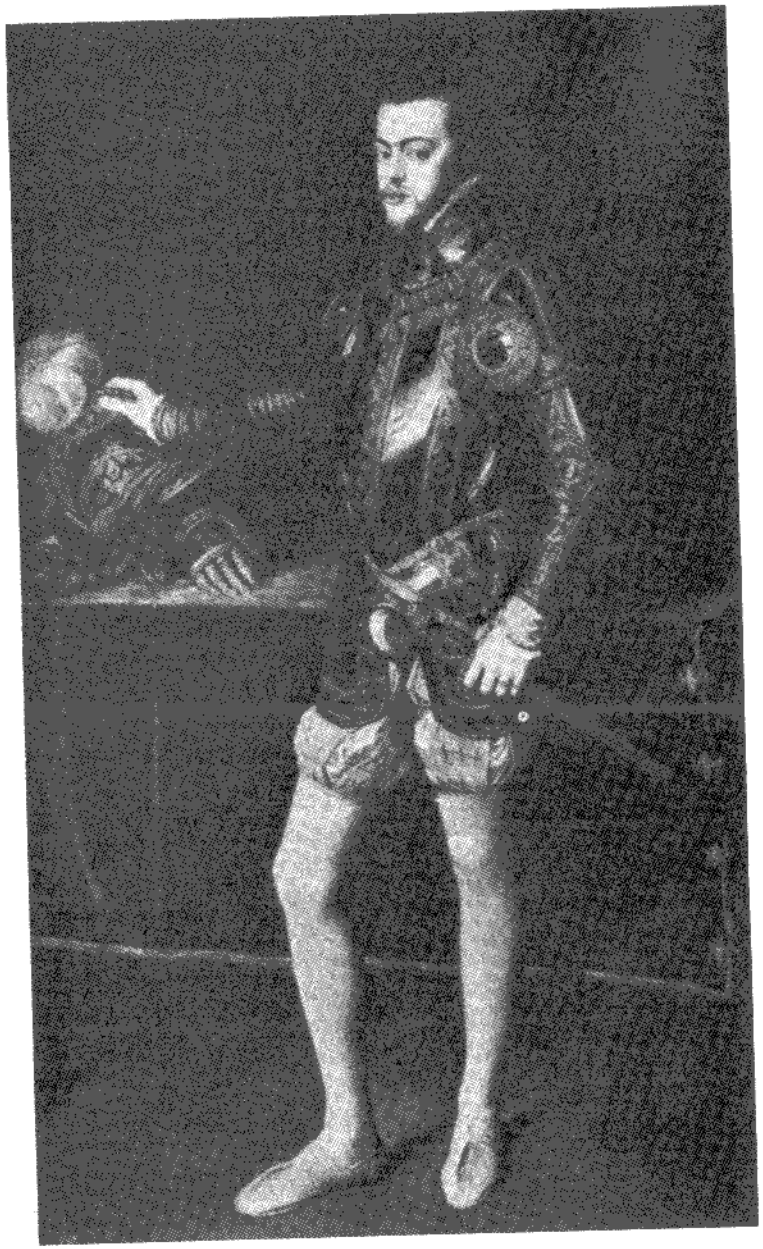
As the flood of papers began to flow more abundantly problems of storage naturally arose. Due to the wandering habits of Charles V the crown and its officials had never been in a position to consult their own records. In 1547 the cortes of Monzón had established the office of Chronicler of the Kingdom of Aragon, whose duty it was to collect and compile the records of the eastern kingdom. The first and greatest incumbent was Jerónimo de Zurita, and in 1567 Philip II commissioned him to search out and collect all state documents in Aragon and the Italian dependencies and deposit them in the castle of Simancas, near Valladolid, where Philip's first secretary of state, Gonzalo Pérez, had already begun to concentrate the Castilian royal papers. In this way one of the greatest national archives in Europe was formed, and for the first time the crown could dispose of its own records with some efficiency. But not with complete efficiency, for Simancas was remote from Madrid and documents were not readily accessible for consultation. Therefore the royal secretaries tended to hoard records in their own house, partly for reference but partly as insurance against possible victimisation in the future. Thus, in spite of the methods of secrecy imposed by Philip II there was a leakage of confidential and in some cases damaging documents, and it was for this reason that the king was subsequently anxious to get his hands on the papers of his secretary Antonio Pérez, when the latter fell from grace.

Although personal monarchy was the mainspring of government, even Philip II could not dispense with institutions. On the contrary his sense of duty compelled him to improve what he had inherited. Conciliar govern-

[18] *Correspondencia privada de Felipe II con su secretario Mateo Vázquez, 1567–1591*, ed. C. Riba García (Madrid, 1959), vol. i. pp. 128, 205.

ment was still the essential feature of Habsburg administration, and it was still headed nominally by the Council of State. But the latter never had the opportunity of developing into a privy council on the lines of that familiar in England. The crown's anxiety to control policy meant that its competence was not defined beyond a vague commission to discuss foreign affairs and matters of state, and the size of its membership was not fixed, though the presidents of the Council of Castile and the Council of Italy usually had seats. Although the king was nominally its president he never attended meetings. Here, as elsewhere, he preferred to communicate in writing, through his secretaries, and to be informed of its deliberations by *consulta*, the document containing the council's opinion on any matter on which the king happened to consult it. The king's absence, and the fact that rival policies were apparently canvassed there, have given rise to the view that he deliberately allowed freedom of speech in the council in order to play off rival factions against one another and thus remain immune from a single pressure. But there was no need for Philip II to adopt so devious a course for a council whose composition and competence were entirely at his discretion and whose advice he was under no obligation to take. It was natural that its members should have opinions, and these were useful to the king as a means by which he could keep in touch with the policies or interests being represented. Such was the limit of its usefulness; and even this was qualified by the fact that what members said in council did not necessarily represent their opinions, for they often contradicted their public views in secret reports to the king. This was how Philip II himself preferred to do things. He had a small and exclusive group of major advisers and servants on whom he could draw for important assignments—the Castilian, the Duke of Alba, the Portuguese, Ruy Gómez da Silva and Christóvão de Moura, the Catalan Luis de Requesens, the Basque Juan de Idiáquez, and the Burgundian Cardinal Granvelle—but these he preferred to spread out over a number of offices according to his needs rather than institutionalise them in a single council, though some of them were members of the Council of State. The latter, in fact, never outgrew its amateur status and remained a group of grandees, favourites, and ecclesiastics whom the king consulted as he pleased.

The regional councils, on the other hand, which supervised the administration of particular kingdoms or areas—Castile, Aragon, Italy, Portugal, the Low Countries, and the Indies—were fully professionalised, and while they were not ministries they were the means by which central control was imposed on the whole empire. These councils, as has been seen, exercised not only executive functions, but also legislative and judicial ones. For sixteenth-century Spaniards thought of government chiefly in terms of



Philip II, in armour by Titian

jurisdiction; the traditional duty of their king was to do justice. But this confusion of functions meant that Spanish government did not possess a central organ specialising in administration. The defects of the system were mirrored in the Council of Castile. The decrease in the membership of the council in the closing years of Charles V's reign, together with the general neglect of internal administration at the time, resulted in an accumulation of unfinished business, especially of legal suits. In 1559 Philip II increased the number of councillors to sixteen in addition to the president, and this remained fixed for the rest of the reign. But its judicial functions continued to act as a drag on its efficiency, and it was not until 1598, the last year of his reign, that Philip II decreed a division of the council into separate departments, each with a special function of its own, one executive and administrative, the other judicial.[19] Whether the reform was actually implemented, however, is another matter, for it had to be repeated in 1608. Administration by committee, operating with all the formality of a court of law, had obvious weaknesses. The Count of Barajas, president of the Council of Castile from 1583 to 1592, complained of the confusion and inefficiency which stemmed from its defective organisation and 'which render intolerable the office of president of this Council. There is no order of precedence in the cases that come before it, save the memory of those councillors who have to deal with them . . . so that it is necessary for all who have suits to be tried to pace up and down the courtyard and struggle with one another to get nearer the door of the Council in the hope that they may be the next to be called before it. . . .'[20] In the hands of a king who preferred not to delegate responsibility, there was little hope of reform. Philip II preferred to leave the council submerged under its legal business while he rescued it from administrative stagnation by his own industry.

Aragon also had its council, though, like the other non-Castilian regional councils, it was not located in the area it administered but remained in attendance on the king, subject to central and Castilian influence. Nevertheless, Philip II respected its constitution, which provided that its president and five councillors should always be Aragonese, Catalans and Valencians. The Council of Aragon 'consulted' the affairs of the eastern kingdoms and was the organ of communication between the king and his representatives there. It was also the supreme court of justice for Valencia, the Balearics, and Sardinia; not for Aragon or Catalonia, whose *fueros* demanded that justice be administered within the kingdom, and in the case of Aragon proper this meant in the Audiencia of Zaragoza. Originally the Council of Aragon had possessed jurisdiction in the Spanish dominions in Italy, where, although the king reserved administrative powers to himself and his

[19] Merriman, *op. cit.*, iv. 415–16.

[20] Quoted *ibid.*, iv. 417–18.

governors, he allowed the council to exercise judicial functions. But the anxiety of the Castilian administration to break the Aragonese tradition of regarding Italy as an exclusively Aragonese affair, associated with a council which contained no Castilians, caused it to separate Italian affairs from the Council of Aragon and assign them to a new body. Thus, in 1555, the Council of Italy was created, of which the principal members were Castilians; it was distinct from that of Aragon and took from it the affairs of Naples, Sicily and Milan.[21] The new council, whose organisation was perfected by Philip II, was composed of six councillors, called regents, three of whom were Spaniards and three Italians, while all of them were lawyers. The office of president was usually held by a man of some political experience, a distinguished grandee like the Duke of Francavilla, or a high ecclesiastic such as Cardinals Granvelle and Quiroga. Under the president and regents were a horde of minor officials of varying importance, some of them taken over from the Council of Aragon. The most important office shared with the latter was that of the treasurer-general, occupied for much of Philip II's reign by the Count of Chinchón, and—a significant point—not confined to natives. The Council of Italy was the supreme court of appeal for the Italian dominions and supervised all aspects of administration there, including appointments, trade, and finance. But during the whole of Philip II's reign the council's judicial business was still considered its most important activity, and it was not called upon to discuss vital matters of policy.[22]

Government by committee and *consulta* probably reached its maximum efficiency in the reign of Philip II, yet still remained imperfect. The king's refusal to attend council meetings only increased the suspicion and lack of confidence which were already deeply embedded in Spanish government. As the king's policy was unknown to councillors they were afraid to speak their minds too freely or commit themselves to a definite position in case they ended up on the wrong side. The king himself often reversed his councils' decisions given in *consulta* without informing them of the fact. These conditions made it impossible for the councils to develop a consistent policy even within their own narrow limits of authority. Matters of state policy, of course, were beyond their competence and exclusively reserved for the king, who might or might not consult the Council of State upon them. But even at an administrative level they were unable to develop a policy of their own. For the king insisted on being consulted on almost every matter of council business, and especially on official appointments and on the granting of privileges or licences of every kind. Apart from

[21] C. Riba, *El Consejo Supremo de Aragón en el reinado de Felipe II* (Valencia, 1914), p. xvii.

[22] Koenigsberger, *The Government of Sicily under Philip II of Spain*, p. 68.

official appointments, he considered numerous private requests for advancement. Of the 54 *consultas* from one council alone—that of Italy—which were in the king's hands on one day in 1583, no less than 37 were private petitions.[23] No doubt favouritism and bribery existed as they did in most contemporary administrations, but the thousands of *consultas* listing and commenting on candidates proposed by the different councils for high office, both secular and ecclesiastical, are abundant testimony of the meticulous care taken by king and councils in the selection of officials. But Philip II's personal scrutiny of patronage was not limitless and it was impossible for him to satisfy his desire for absolute control over his subordinates. Given the enormity of the task there was often no alternative but to follow the advice of his councils. Moreover, Philip was in financial difficulties from the time of his accession, and for this reason he promoted the sale of many public offices, a device which his successors were to exploit even more ruthlessly. Certain classes of office were already being sold in Spain by Charles V. But Philip II began to create offices with no other intention than that of selling them, and he extended the practice to the Indies.[24] Sale of office was not necessarily corrupt, and it might be regarded as another form of indirect taxation, the candidate paying a fee for the office he would have received in any case; moreover, Philip II excluded from sale senior administrative and financial posts and all judicial appointments. But the multiplication of offices, in areas of administration where they were not necessarily most needed, set a bad precedent and lowered administrative standards generally.

Conciliar posts could not be bought, but even so they were not filled with outstanding administrators. The king's search for loyalty and his suspicion of independence in his officials encouraged mediocrity and conservatism in the councils, as in other branches of the administration. Moreover, as the councils were primarily courts of law they were naturally composed almost entirely of lawyers, whose preoccupation with the details of law and procedure made them incapable of taking initiative in administration. Like the rest of the Spanish bureaucracy under the early Habsburgs, they are often described as 'middle-class officials', but in the absence of a middle class in Spain they are best described as professional jurists, the products of the universities and the minor gentry. The Spanish bureaucracy had not always been recruited from the universities, as has been seen, but increasingly a university career and degree became a passport to ecclesiastical and civil preferment, and whatever opportunity existed in Spain for

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 63.
[24] J. H. Parry, *The Sale of Public Office in the Spanish Indies under the Habsburgs* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1953), pp. 1–5.

men born in poverty and obscurity lay along this path. The contemporary historian of the reign of Philip II, Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, observes that the king preferred 'virtue to noble birth and therefore in his reign all applied themselves to letters'.[25] The remark had become suspiciously like a formula, applied by the chroniclers to all good kings from the Catholic Monarchs onwards, but Philip's respect for learning makes it appropriate in his case. The growth of universities and the increase in the number of students in Spain in the sixteenth century were closely related to the fact that church and state provided opportunities for graduates, and the products of Alcalá and Salamanca were to be found in large numbers in the administration of Philip II. Another avenue to civil promotion was the church. Gonzalo Pérez, who rose from obscure and probably Jewish origin to be Philip II's secretary of state, was a priest. Diego de Espinosa was a cardinal and Inquisitor general as well as President of the Council of Castile. Diego de Covarrubias y Leyva, son of a noble family of Toledo, made his way via the University of Salamanca, where he was professor of canon law, to become a judge of the Audiencia of Granada, then bishop of Ciudad Rodrigo and archbishop of Santo Domingo in the Indies, and finally President of the Council of Castile. Gaspar de Quiroga, son of a poor though noble family of northern Castile—a characteristic beginning—was another graduate of Salamanca who secured a steady succession of civil and ecclesiastical appointments—President of the Council of Italy, primate, cardinal and Inquisitor general.[26] Philip II did not exclude the higher aristocracy entirely from the fruits of office. Like his predecessors he usually favoured them for the highest positions, the viceroyalties and governorships, as well as for the foreign embassies. He even used them sometimes for internal administration and on his councils. Luis Hurtado de Mendoza, second marquis of Mondéjar, was President of the Council of Castile from 1561 to 1563. But after Mondéjar's retirement his six successors in the Council of Castile during Philip II's reign, with the exception of the Count of Barajas (1583–92), were all either jurists or clerics.[27]

Conciliar administration, as has been seen, could not have worked without an efficient link between king and councils. This was provided by the royal secretaries, whose organisation reflected in some ways that of the councils themselves. Just as there was not a single council responsible for the whole empire, so there was not a single secretariat. To each of the regional councils a separate royal secretary was attached, while the king

[25] Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, *Felipe Segundo, Rey de España* (1619) (4 vols., Madrid 1876–77), ii. 354.
[26] Boyd, *Cardinal Quiroga, Inquisitor General of Spain*, p. 4.
[27] Merriman, *op. cit.*, iv. 417.

communicated with the Council of State through his principal secretary, who might be described as his secretary of state. Institutionally the office made no real advance on the position reached by Cobos under Charles V; that is to say its holder was more than a clerk but less than a minister, remaining essentially the king's private secretary. Indeed, Philip II's secretaries probably exercised less independence than those of Charles V, for the king attended personally to all incoming correspondence and outgoing orders and directed the work of all his secretaries. On the other hand the enormous growth of paper administration under Philip II increased the importance of the secretary, for it was he who was responsible for keeping the cumbersome machine moving. The administration worked at two levels. Routine correspondence went to the secretaries; important papers were sent directly to the king and he decided to whom to remit them. Thus the ordinary secretaries dealt with routine matters of government, while the king and his private secretary dealt with major items of policy.[28] The secretaries were the vital link with the councils; in consultation with the king they remitted papers to their appropriate council, receiving back the *consultas* which they then considered with the king. They attended council meetings, and although they might not have a vote their close contact with the king gave their views some influence, and it was they who drafted the *consultas*. Their power was certainly sufficient to arouse the resentment of the councils, as it had done under Charles V; in 1578, for example, the Council of Italy urged the secretary's replacement by three clerks entirely dependent on itself, a system which already prevailed in the Council of Aragon, whose secretariat had not produced an outstanding figure. But Philip II resisted this suggestion, for apart from considerations of security he regarded the secretary as his own official and not a dependant of the council.

The power and influence of the secretary made his office virtually the only one which attracted any political interest. Charles V had preferred a dual administration of affairs of state, and had shared them between Cobos and Granvelle. Philip II, however, began—uncharacteristically—with a single secretary of state, Gonzalo Pérez, a brilliant administrator of obscure Aragonese origin and reputed to be of Jewish descent. He had entire supervision of foreign correspondence, in much the same way as Cecil had under Elizabeth but without the English minister's influence on policy. On his death in 1566 he was succeeded by his son Antonio, whose ability outshone even that of his father. But Antonio Pérez did not get the

[28] For a detailed account of the working of Spanish government from the secretary's viewpoint, see A. W. Lovett, *Philip II and Mateo Vázquez de Leca: the Government of Spain (1572–1592)* (Geneva, 1977), pp. 34–38.

office in its entirety; he was secretary of state, it is true, but his duties were confined to northern affairs, France, England, the Low Countries, and Germany, while his secretaryship of the Council of Castile also gave him supervision of internal correspondence. Mediterranean affairs, however, were assigned to another secretary, Diego de Vargas, who was the sole secretary of the Council of Italy. It was after the death of Vargas that political pressure was brought to bear on the office, as factions manoeuvred for influence at court and attempted to exercise it through the secretaryship. For this reason the king himself became more wary. With the support of his friends at court, especially the Marquis of los Vélez and Archbishop Quiroga, Antonio Pérez claimed the office vacated by Vargas in 1578. But the Count of Chinchón, and all those who feared an extension of Pérez's power, resisted his claim by trying to reduce the status of the office. This Philip II refused to do, but he continued the division of responsibility, and Vargas was eventually succeeded by Gabriel de Zayas who supervised the Italian and Mediterranean correspondence.[29]

Meanwhile, Philip II's growing suspicion of his subordinates and his anxiety to divide responsibility still further led him to increase his secretariat in 1573 by appointing to it Mateo Vázquez de Leca. This assiduous and methodical cleric rose from obscurity in Seville to become Cardinal Espinosa's secretary when the latter was Philip II's private secretary, and he succeeded Espinosa in the office in 1573. He survived the shoals of Philip II's administration for eighteen years until his death in 1591, largely by his utter loyalty and his readiness to inform on his colleagues. Vázquez, in fact, became a kind of 'arch-secretary', who handled mostly domestic affairs but whom Philip also gave foreign correspondence without notice to either of his secretaries of state. On the fall of Antonio Pérez in 1579, which Vázquez himself helped to manoeuvre, he became the chief secretary, and Philip II did his most important business almost entirely through him. But the ferocious discipline of work which Philip imposed on himself was too much for others and Mateo Vázquez began to wilt under the strain, as indeed the king himself did. Therefore, from about 1580 a secretarial committee was formed which operated under Vázquez's supervision. Affairs of state were assigned to Juan de Idiáquez, a Basque who, like Cardinal Granvelle, was recalled from embassy service in Italy when Philip was surrounding himself with those he could trust at the time of

[29] On Gonzalo Pérez see A. González Palencia, *Gonzalo Pérez, secretario de Felipe II* (2 vols., Madrid, 1946); on development of the office after his death see Marañón, *Antonio Pérez*, i. 33–34, 87–88, 384–85, ii. App. III, XLII, and LXXXVII; Koenigsberger, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

Pérez's disgrace in 1579; the Count of Chinchón, a man of conservative instincts who had long been a familiar figure in the administration, was given Aragonese and Italian business; and Christóvão de Moura, a Portuguese favourite who had already occupied various posts at court, specialised in affairs of his own country. All three met with Mateo Vázquez to handle papers of importance including the *consultas* of the councils, and to give their opinions upon them; these were then communicated to the king by Vázquez who acted as secretary of the committee and remained the king's confidential secretary.[30]

In the second half of the 1580's, as policy became more complex and expensive, the structure of government underwent further development. A system of juntas emerged and proved to be a flexible and efficient form of administration; these were called as they were needed, from a pool of ministers and officials, to deal with particular problems. The Junta Grande made its appearance from 1586 to organise the collection of supplies for the Armada or perhaps to deal with finance in general. It was an informal gathering of officials, whose advice to the king was usually taken seriously. Soon it was exercising a co-ordinating role in government, arousing the jealousy of those who were not members, and working under the control of a secretary, usually Vázquez. The Junta Grande had a fairly large membership, and particular aspects of government were assigned to special sub-committees, smaller juntas such as the Junta de Cortes, Junta de Arbitrios, Junta de Presidentes, Junta de Población, Junta de Milicia. The Junta Grande was more than an advisory committee, less than an executive. Personal monarchy remained intact and in charge, but within the ranks of the Junta there was an inner group made up of Moura, Idiáquez, Vázquez and Chinchón, who formulated major policy and general strategy and were immediately responsible to the crown. These came to be known as the Junta of the Night.[31] Secretary Vázquez played an important part in the development of the junta system; he was the go-between linking king and juntas.

All this was a far cry from the situation in the first two decades of the reign, when Gonzalo Pérez and his son had added personal status if not constitutional stature to the office. Far from growing into a real ministry, the secretaryship had actually shrunk in importance, its functions divided among lesser men whose rôle was mute and anonymous. Caught between

[30] Riba, *El Consejo Supremo de Aragón*, pp. xxi–xxii; *Correspondencia privada de Felipe II con su secretario Mateo Vázquez*, passim; Lovett, *op. cit.*, pp. 11, 29–33.

[31] The details of the junta system were first established by Lovett, *op. cit.*, pp. 144–45, 201–5.

the jealousy of the councils and the suspicion of the king, it had never been able to escape from its clerkly origins. As personal status counted for so much in Spain, a secretary could only cope with the magnates of the council, who were probably contemptuous of him, by making himself as much like a great lord as possible, increasing his own household, using its members as his assistants, and generally creating an unofficial empire of his own within the royal administration. Then he would have to cultivate important figures at court, helping them with his influence in their search for privilege and preferment, and gradually forming a faction on whose support he could count. At this point he exposed himself to grave risks—the intrigues of rival secretaries, and the suspicion of the king. This was precisely the fate of Antonio Pérez, who began as a secretary, tried to act like a minister, and ended in disgrace. The experience made Philip II permanently suspicious of the office.

Yet for over ten years Antonio Pérez exercised a compelling influence on Philip II, and his rise to power was unequalled in sixteenth-century Spain. As the son of a priest, a public career might well have been closed to him, but the liability was overcome by the careful formation he was given by his father. Brought up officially as Gonzalo's nephew, he attended the universities of Louvain and Salamanca and completed his studies in Italy. Already initiated by his father in affairs of state, he was the obvious choice to succeed him as secretary in 1567. Soon the king's confidence in him was almost absolute, and suitors sought his good offices, for it was known that Philip often took his advice. But how was this vain, venal, and somewhat disreputable man able to acquire such influence over so aloof, distrustful, and demanding a king? Cultivated tastes, smooth manners, clever use of flattery, a certain servility—all these traits undoubtedly seduced Philip, who was never at ease with strong and independent personalities. But Pérez also had ability, and Philip recognised it; this was a case where talent was rewarded. The king appreciated his outstanding intelligence, his knowledge of affairs, especially of the problems of foreign policy, and his instinct for getting to the heart of a matter, all of which marked him out from the horde of mediocrities which filled the administration. Thus, confident of royal favour, Pérez advanced his career. He maintained a large establishment —a fashionable house in Madrid and a palace on the outskirts where he kept a crowd of raffish retainers and lived in a style which was the envy of other officials. He was on terms of familiarity with everyone who counted at court; the higher nobility were obliged to recognise him, for he could help them to preferment, and he also had friends among the clergy, notably Cardinal Quiroga, whom he helped to the see of Toledo and who remained his supporter almost to the end. And as his influence increased so did his

affluence. His salary, of course, was not enough, even counting the large emoluments incidental to so strategic an office. But he had links with Genoese business men, especially the Spinolas, whom he helped in their negotiations with the king. Like most of his contemporaries, he made money out of the exercise of his office.

A man so close to the source of power was bound to attract friends and create enemies, and even to introduce an element of politics into the administration. Absolute though he was, Philip II could not live in complete isolation from human beings; he needed officials, he noted their views, and he might take their advice. The advisers naturally tried to monopolise the king, and with him influence and power. Consequently even in the apolitical life of Spain, where all policy decisions and most administrative ones were made by the king alone, factions formed around those who were close to the throne and in a position to gain royal favour; for favour meant office and privilege. In the first two decades of the reign there were two vague but discernible factions, towards which councillors and officials gravitated, one led by the Portuguese favourite, Ruy Gómez da Silva, the Prince of Eboli, and the other by the powerful magnate, the Duke of Alba. Conditions seemed propitious for faction. There was not yet complete agreement on the basis of policy, especially of foreign policy, and the government was still wavering between alternatives. The alternatives might be expected to follow two common approaches to political problems, one intransigent and traditionalist, the other flexible and moderate. For this reason the Eboli faction is often described as a peace party, or even a liberal one, while the Alba faction is described as a war party, and regarded as conservative. But these labels have little substance. True, the Duke of Alba urged war to the bitter end in the Low Countries, but he had no desire to take the war across the English Channel; he stood for a line of diplomatic compromise with England and in this area he exercised a restraining influence on Spanish policy. The so-called peace party, on the other hand, while it might advocate a pacific settlement in the Low Countries, did so in order to gain a breathing-space which would enable Spain to wage war on England by means of an invasion across the Channel. In any case, as policy was an unchallenged prerogative of the crown and there was no means of changing it, there could be no political parties; and needless to say there were no 'liberals' in sixteenth-century Spain. The opinions of these groups, in fact, were not consistent but changed according to the time and the problem. Their real objective was not the promotion of a policy but the conquest of power and wealth, both of which were to be found in royal grace and favour. And as power for one man usually meant loss of power by another it was inevitable that there should be rival factions; it was notorious that

Eboli and Alba automatically opposed each other on every problem that arose.[32]

The Eboli faction attracted a sizeable group of nobles—the Marquis of los Vélez, a veteran warrior and diplomat and member of the Council of State; the Duke of Sessa, a descendant of the Great Captain; the large and powerful family of Mendoza, whose members were usually to be found in viceregal or ambassadorial office; and it could later count on the support of Cardinal Quiroga.

It also comprised a number of officials, and of these the most distinguished was Antonio Pérez, who became its key figure and took over the leadership after the death of Eboli in 1573, mobilising it for his own purposes. It was then that his association with Eboli's wife became close, so close indeed that much of the political conflict of Philip II's reign has been explained in terms of an alleged love affair between the Princess of Eboli and Antonio Pérez, and attributed to the rivalry of the king and his secretary for the love of the same woman. The story, like so many others of the reign, is untrue—untrue of Pérez as well as of Philip.[33] The Princess of Eboli, who wore a black patch over her right eye, was another member of the Mendoza family, a domineering woman, pious in a theatrical way—she entered a convent the day her husband died and came out a few months later—but above all avid for influence over affairs and people. St. Teresa suffered from her attentions; Antonio Pérez was helped to ruin by them. The political objectives of this eccentric woman amounted to little more than an anxiety to interfere wherever she could, and so she cultivated Pérez whom she believed 'would go far', hoping through him to remain at the centre of things when her husband's death threatened to deprive her of influence. Pérez, of course, found her useful because of her aristocratic connections. But their relationship was purely political and financial: both needed money, and there was money to be earned by an official who had the right connections. So he revealed to her state secrets, and together they traded in royal grants and government information, helping suitors who

[32] Marañón, *op. cit.*, i. 30–32, 125–28, while recognising the inconsistency of the factions and the real nature of their objectives, still calls them 'liberals' and 'conservatives', and sees their origin in the time of the *comuneros*, the latter being feudal and conservative, and the royalists progressive. But the evidence is vague and the argument unconvincing.

[33] Contemporary English opinion of Philip II, of course, like Spanish opinion of Elizabeth I, was quite defamatory. Giving news from Calais on 28 August 1588 Howard wrote to Burghley: 'The King's bastard son, the Duke of Pascaredo (Pastrana), came there yesterday'; in J. K. Laughton, *State Papers relating to the defeat of the Spanish Armada* (Navy Records Society, 2 vols., London, 1894), ii. 174. The Duke of Pastrana was in fact the son of the Princess of Eboli but his father was Ruy Gómez, not Philip II.

were prepared to buy their favours. And the intrigue was probably empty of love.[34]

The spokesman of the opposing faction was the Duke of Alba, powerful head of a powerful family, whose distinguished military and viceregal career was put to its severest test in the Low Countries. Alba was an inveterate enemy of Pérez and his group, all of whom he included in his hatred of the Prince of Eboli, his old rival in the Council of State, and in his aristocratic contempt for officials. On his side were ranged his own extensive household—the Toledos were prolific in generals, admirals, and viceroys—the secretaries Vázquez, Zayas, Idiáquez, and Moura, and the king's confessor, Fr. Chaves. The faction also included two great lords who had considerable influence in the second part of the reign, and both of whom enriched themselves shamelessly from office—the Count of Barajas, President of the Council of Castile, whom Philip was to employ in his campaign against Antonio Pérez until he in turn was investigated for peculation and deprived of office, and the Count of Chinchón, treasurer-general of Aragon and Italy, an extreme royalist who owed his preferment to Pérez's rival, Mateo Vázquez. In the 1570's, however, the faction had not yet reached its place in the sun. The Duke of Alba failed in the Low Countries; by 1572 he was out of favour with Philip II and his governorship subject to inspection. His recall in 1573 and subsequent banishment from court by a king who was tired of his pretensions coincided with the beginning of Pérez's great influence. But Pérez too overreached himself. From trading in grants and official information he passed to unauthorised interference in matters of state—in affairs of the Low Countries and perhaps of Portugal—and so to his undoing in 1579. Once administrators tried to act like politicians Philip II struck them down, and he did so with impunity. The basic weakness of factional politics of this kind was that they had no strength outside the administration. From his cortes the king had nothing to fear.

5. Cortes and Commonwealth

Spanish political theorists in the sixteenth century rejected despotism and insisted that the sovereign rule in accordance with divine and natural law. But, with few exceptions, they allowed the king absolute power. One of the exceptions was the Jesuit theologian, Juan de Mariana, who, after a brilliant career at the University of Alcalá, taught with outstanding success at his order's colleges in Rome and Paris, returning to Spain in 1574 to live

[34] Marañón, *op. cit.*, i. 165–213.

the life of a scholar in the Jesuit house in Toledo. There in 1599 he published his famous political treatise, *De Rege et Regis Institutione*, written for the guidance of the heir to the throne, who in the meantime had become Philip III. The book was a bitter indictment of absolutism.

Mariana, of course, like other Spanish philosophers, preferred monarchy to any other type of government; but his preference was qualified by the assertion that the king must rule not only with a council but also with the consent of his subjects expressed in a senate composed of 'the best men', and must administer 'public and private affairs in accordance with their expressed opinions'.[35] But who decided policy in case of conflict? Was the authority of the king or the commonwealth greater? 'The regal power', he argued, 'if it is lawful, ever has its source from the citizen'; this power 'they hedged about with laws and obligations, lest it . . . degenerate into tyranny'.[36] Therefore Mariana approved of the protective laws and institutions of Aragon, where he considered the law of the community, or commonwealth as he called it, was greater than that of the king. This he regarded as an ideal to which other provinces should aspire, for it was in the common interest to limit the king's power. In Castile, unlike Aragon, there was no appeal to the commonwealth. While Mariana recognised that in matters of foreign policy, justice, and appointments the king was absolute by law in Spain, he rejected the notion that he could levy taxes, or abrogate laws, as he pleased. In these matters there was, or ought to be, right of opposition, a right which had been taken away in Castile but still existed in Aragon.

Right of criticism and opposition, argued Mariana, should be embodied in the cortes, and for this reason he criticised the decline of the cortes of Castile and its neglect by the crown. Bishops and nobles had been excluded in order that decisions could be left to the king alone and to the whim of a few, while 'the procurators of the towns . . . are corrupted by gifts and expectations; since they are not chosen deliberately but by lot, a new means of corruption and a proof of a confused commonwealth'. The result had been that policy, disastrous policy, had got beyond control, while 'events prove the spread of kingly power in war and peace'.[37] The most important power which Mariana reserved for the cortes was control of taxation and legislation. But he went further than this, for he also claimed for the commonwealth, represented in the cortes, the right to decide the fate of a tyrant king. It was this which earned his book such notoriety, for he asserted

[35] In G. Lewy, *Constitutionalism and Statecraft during the Golden Age of Spain: A Study of the Political Philosophy of Juan de Mariana, S.J.* (Geneva, 1960), p. 53.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 55.
[37] *Ibid.*, p. 57.

that a king could 'be removed from office and even punished with death under exceptional circumstances'.[38]

Mariana, then, rejected the kind of absolutism which he saw before his eyes in Castile, the absolutism in fact practised by Philip II. His views were not revolutionary; he looked back to what he regarded as medieval government, and he wanted the return of the bishops to the cortes even more than the return of the nobility, whom he disliked. But the monarchy he advocated was constitutional monarchy, for in his view the king was responsible not only to God but also to the people, acting through their representatives in the cortes and in accordance with the law of the land. Yet Mariana was exceptional. True, other Spanish political philosophers like Francisco de Vitoria, Francisco Suárez, Domingo de Soto, and Diego de Covarrubias also subscribed to the theory of the popular origin of sovereignty, in the sense that they derived political authority from God via the people and insisted that power was based on consent, or, as Soto asserted, that 'kings and princes are created by the people who vest in them the authority to govern'.[39] And they all rejected tyranny. But, in their anxiety to preserve law and order and the authority of judge and ruler, they invariably admitted qualifications to the limits they placed on sovereignty. Vitoria allowed for no appeal from king to commonwealth, and argued that 'it is better that the laws of the tyrant be obeyed than to live without any'; while Suárez conceded that a king could tax without consent. But the greatest weakness of arguments such as these was that they never advanced beyond abstract speculation. In spite of their scholarship, their sense of tradition and responsibility, their respect for the law, in spite of their advocacy of the right to resist tyranny, even perhaps by killing the tyrant, in the ultimate analysis the Spanish neo-scholastics were supporters of outright absolutism. For their democratic theory of the origin of sovereignty never included institutional safeguards by which a king might be judged and controlled by some human authority outside of himself. Consequently, unlike Mariana, they were incapable of providing any real check against the abuse of political authority, as long as that authority was legitimate and acting, at least theoretically, in accordance with divine and natural law and for the common good. Yet their views were probably

[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 72. Mariana's *De Rege* was published in Spain without causing comment, but in Paris it was burnt by the public hangman in 1610 after the assassination of Henry IV. The Spanish Inquisition was more interested in other works of Mariana; see below, pp. 266–67.

[39] Lewy, *op. cit.*, pp. 62–64; see also V. Beltrán de Heredia, *Francisco de Vitoria* (Madrid, 1939); L. Sánchez Agesta, *El concepto del Estado en el pensamiento español del siglo XVI* (Madrid, 1959).

more representative of Spanish opinion than were those of Mariana, and they certainly reflected political realities in Castile.

By the reign of Philip II the cortes of Castile had lost any prerogatives they had ever possessed. After the exceptional assembly of 1538 they were reduced to a single chamber, composed of thirty-six representatives of eighteen towns, chosen not by election but by lot and sometimes in rotation from a municipal oligarchy of privileged families or groups of magistrates, and in such a way that royal intervention could be easily exercised if necessary. From the fifteenth century their right to be consulted before the crown took extraordinary taxation had been increasingly evaded, and without the means of making redress precede supply they were incapable of providing any restraint on personal monarchy. There remained little of their rights to preserve, but that little was also taken from them. At the very beginning of Philip II's reign, their last authentic prerogative, that of refusing to consent to the revocation of laws passed in previous cortes, was undermined: 'If it be my pleasure,' declared Philip in 1555, 'I shall annul, without the cortes, the laws made in the cortes; I shall legislate by edicts and I shall abolish laws by edicts.'[40] Later, to remove the last remnants of resistance, he began to attack the *poderes*, or instructions given by towns to their deputies in an attempt to prescribe their conduct in the cortes. At the opening of the cortes of 1566 he obliged the deputies to swear that their *poderes* were 'unlimited and unrestricted', and thereafter he used his local officials to obtain the same end.[41] The cortes frequently complained of the way their privileges were being ignored, petitioning against the imposition of new taxes without their consent, against the usurpation of the legislative authority by the Council of Castile, and demanding that no new law or edict be made by the king alone while the cortes were in session.[42] The king allowed them their head. In 1569 he even authorised the publication of the *Nueva Recopilación*, or revised laws of the kingdom, which actually contained laws in which the principal powers of the cortes in legislation and finance were specifically stated to be in force.[43] The difference between theory and practice, complacently accepted, could hardly be carried to greater lengths.

This was the situation which Mariana denounced—abject failure by frequently corrupt procurators of the towns effectively to defend the cortes' original rights in taxation and legislation. Yet, impotent as they were, why did Philip II continue to convoke them? Partly because of his perverse

[40] *Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y de Castilla*, v. 677. See Merriman, *op. cit.*, iv., 422–33.

[41] *Actas de las Cortes de Castilla* (Madrid, 1877–91), ii. 13.

[42] *Ibid.*, iv. 529–31; vi. 311–22.

[43] Merriman, *op. cit.*, iv. 427.

respect for the technicalities of the law, and partly because of his anxiety to remain in touch with outside opinion. His method of government depended on his possession of detailed information of his states which he could not acquire himself; so he used the cortes to keep himself informed of affairs and opinions. It was a one-sided arrangement, for he refused to be consulted personally by deputations of procurators, and his answers to their petitions were non-committal or negative, and sometimes given after the assembly had been closed. The petitions themselves are revealing. Except for occasional criticisms of the foreign policy of Philip II, mainly in the last years of the reign, the cortes usually left matters of policy well alone. They were more interested in local affairs, especially in the financial and economic state of the country, in the security of foreign commerce, the state of coastal defences, the attacks of Moorish and English corsairs, the moriscos, the excesses of the Inquisition, student behaviour, and the proliferation of obscene literature. Even Philip II could only have regarded most of their petitions as innocuous.

Monarchy, then, was absolute. But its absolutism was qualified by conditions, and its power was less imposing in practice than it was in theory. It was restricted in the first place by inefficiency; the bureaucracy, which was not large by present-day standards, never entirely succeeded in overcoming the obstacles of distance involved in governing Spain and in applying central decisions over the length and breadth of the country. It was also restricted by the existence of local forces; the aristocracy with their feudal jurisdiction, and some of the towns with their privileges, had traditionally demanded a share in royal control of the country or some degree of independence from such control. These forces were less vigorous in Philip II's reign and more vulnerable to royal pressure exercised through local officials. In Castile, at least, his sixty-six *corregidores*, extensively endowed with judicial and administrative functions, dominated the town councils and took his authority to the mass of the people. But there were further constraints on central government. As the state sought to share the increasing costs of war with its wealthier subjects, so it had to share public functions with private or provincial interests. Philip II began his reign with direct control of the machinery of war; he had an army recruited by royal captains and a navy directly administered by the crown. The drift from state control began when the pressure of war, the accumulation of military commitments, the unprecedented demand for men, money and supplies forced the monarchy to re-allocate the burdens and re-distribute the costs of the state.[44] Military

[44] This process has been identified and studied by I. A. A. Thompson, *War and Government in Habsburg Spain* (London, 1976).

administration was then devolved from direct royal control to private contractors and local authorities, from central to local government, from public to private sectors. Military financing came to rely more and more on independent financiers. Then other branches of military administration—the operation of the galleys, construction of shipping and maintenance of fleets, supply and manufacture of arms and munitions, provisioning and recruiting of troops—were delegated to localities or individuals. As the central bureaucracy lost control of this area of government, so contractors, provinces, lords and cities came to enjoy monopoly rights and fiscal and judicial immunities. This led in turn to a revival of aristocratic power and a reinforcement of seigneurial privilege. It also increased the influence of the foreign *asentista* in Spanish government. But while the process can be observed in the middle and later decades of Philip II's reign, it was not complete until the time of Philip IV when the unitary state founded by his predecessors was seriously eroded under the pressure of war.

Outside Castile there were regional immunities, in Granada until 1570, in the Basque country permanently, and above all in Aragon. To travel from Castile to Aragon was to cross a frontier into a different social and political world, where semi-independent lords exercised numerous feudal rights to the detriment of the crown and of their vassals, where Castilians were debarred from office, where laws were different and independently administered, and where taxation was checked by the cortes. Philip II experienced the difference at the very beginning of his reign, when he himself was absent in the Low Countries. In 1556 the viceroy of Aragon, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, Duke of Francavilla, had an Aragonese garrotted on a charge of complicity with brigands. The sentence was regarded as an infringement of the *fueros* and produced a violent reaction: the cortes assembled without royal summons, the people of Zaragoza started rioting, the viceroy was forced to take refuge, and the Regent in Valladolid disavowed him.[45] For the next three years Aragon was without a viceroy, and appeared to have won its point.

There were reasons for the crown's diffidence in Aragon. It was partly a question of security: the proximity of France meant that any disturbance on the eastern periphery of Spain was liable to be exploited by enemies from across the Pyrenees, so it did not pay to alienate Aragon, especially in time of war with France. But the greatest reason has already been noticed.[46] The Aragonese block of states had few resources to offer the crown, either in men or in money, so there was little temptation for the

[45] See J. Reglà Campistol, *Felip II i Catalunya* (Barcelona, 1956), 17–18.
[46] See above, pp. 9–10, 47–49.

crown to claim those resources by absolute methods. This could be seen in Philip II's relations with the cortes of Aragon. The eastern cortes assembled in two ways—in particular cortes held within each kingdom, Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia, and in general cortes when all three met in one place simultaneously, though still sitting separately. But the king rarely visited his eastern kingdoms, and so he held few cortes there. As their taxable capacity was much less than that of Castile there was little inducement for him to do so. Therefore, apart from the meeting of the separate cortes of Aragon in 1592, for which there were special reasons as will be seen, Philip only held two cortes in his eastern kingdoms, and these were general cortes which met at Monzón in 1563 and 1585. Both were empty of incident and both were characterised by the assembly's obsessive concern with legal and constitutional matters, many of them of a trivial nature. And the material stagnation of the region was reflected in the lack of legislation, or even of complaint, on financial and economic affairs, though they voted the moderate subsidies which the king requested. Consequently for most of his reign there was no reason for Philip to change the principles of his predecessors with regard to the eastern kingdoms. With their voluntary co-operation, he levied troops and taxes on the few occasions he required them, but there was no temptation to do more. The constitutional obstacles, in fact, can be exaggerated. The crown was never faced by a block of opposition from the states of Aragon; none of them felt a unity of interests with the others, any more than they did with Castile, and they never rallied to the other's defence. Consequently Philip was able to deal with each one separately. With Aragon he took issue in 1591 when his authority was seriously challenged there.[47] With Catalonia he had already reached an understanding.

6. Catalonia: Security Risk or National Asset?

Catalonia was not secessionist in the sixteenth century. On the contrary it collaborated with the central monarchy and played its part in imperial defence. According to its means, it provided Philip II with men, materials, and money.[48] Troops could be raised in Catalonia, not by conscription it is true, but by voluntary recruitment and often from criminal elements in return for royal pardon; but in one way or another levies were provided for the Low Countries, for the war of Granada, and for garrison duty in

[47] See below, pp. 357–64.

[48] F. Soldevila, *Història de Catalunya* (Barcelona, 1934), ii. 226–27; Reglà, *Felip II i Catalunya*, pp. 41–63. See also J. Vicens Vives, *Notícia de Catalunya* (Barcelona, 1954).

Italy. In Barcelona galleys were constructed, equipped, and manned, and they operated in the defence of the Mediterranean against the Turk and of the coasts against the corsairs. And money was available on occasion: in the first general cortes of the reign in 1563 Catalonia granted Philip 300,000 pounds, and 500,000 in the cortes of 1585. But all this co-operation was qualified by two things. It was given more willingly when Philip's imperial needs coincided with the local interests of Catalonia, and more reservedly when they were regarded as the special interests of Castile; for this reason the Catalans had a large contingent at Lepanto, but were poorly represented in the Spanish Armada. Moreover, it was restricted by the resources of the country. The economic limitations of Catalonia were demonstrated to Philip in 1561 when he required his viceroy, García de Toledo, to procure him a loan of 100,000 ducats. The viceroy was obliged to reply that there was little credit to be obtained in Barcelona, for merchants had little money, and to raise even a small and occasional loan he himself had had to mortgage his property and pay an interest of 9–10 per cent.[49]

The loyalty of Catalonia, within its means, was never seriously in doubt. Yet Philip II found Catalonia a difficult country to govern. The trouble lay not in the *fueros*—local offices were limited to Catalans, but unlike Aragon, they accepted Castilian viceroys—but in social and economic conditions.[50] He had little trouble with Barcelona or any other urban centre, for the merchant classes were weakened by the decline of trade and by the universal aspiration to aristocratic status. But in the highlands of Catalonia his writ was probably less effective than in any other part of Spain. In the mountain cantons brigandage was endemic and kept the whole area in constant state of semi-revolt. Private feuds, often sparked off by an assassination, were openly fought by the highland gentry and the brigands they patronised, while local officials were either sympathetic, or fearful, or short of troops, and certainly handicapped by the remoteness of the mountain districts and their proximity to France, where criminals could take refuge.

At the root of the trouble was a problem of subsistence; the area was poorly endowed by nature, weak in crops, periodically short of foodstuffs, and life there was a fight for survival. Poverty bred lawlessness. The area lay along one of the vital routes from Castile, via Barcelona, to Italy, a route which was used not only for communications but also for the transit

[49] Braudel, *op. cit.*, p. 418.

[50] See above, p. 117, and references to Braudel there; also Reglà, *Felip II i Catalunya*, pp. 109–66, and the same author's 'La cuestión de los Pirineos a comienzos de la Edad Moderna. El intento imperialista de Gastón de Foix', *Estudios de Historia Moderna*, i. (1950), 1–32, and 'El envio de metales preciosos americanos de España a Italia a través de la Corona de Aragón durante los Austrias', *ibid.*, iv. (1954), 189–203.

Elizabeth of Valois, third wife of Philip II by A. Sánchez Coello

of treasure. The temptation was irresistible: official couriers were often robbed and the treasure convoys ran the risk of capture by bands of brigands who made their first big haul in 1587. But the problem was also related to the predicament of the Catalan nobility. Seigneurial jurisdiction of a feudal kind, lay and ecclesiastical, abounded in Catalonia. More than half the country was covered by semi-independent franchises, which not only prevented the king's writ from reaching his subjects directly but also gave rise to conflicts of jurisdiction between neighbouring lords, mutual encroachments, and subsequent friction, with retainers mobilised in their lord's cause. And the country contained more nobles than it could support. There was only one grandee in Catalonia—the Duke of Cardona—but a horde of nobility and gentry; and the prospects for younger sons were bleak indeed. As there were not enough offices to go round in Catalonia itself and those in Castile and the empire were monopolised by Castilians, there was passionate rivalry between families for the few vacancies that did exist, or in default of these for honours, privileges and pensions.[51] Unless a younger son could marry into Castilian society he was often faced with economic ruin. Again, poverty bred lawlessness. Deprived of political and military careers, large numbers of Catalan gentry turned to brigandage, fighting their rivals with large bands of armed retainers. And brigandage was expanding in Philip II's reign. In 1564 he ordered his administrators to scour the country for malefactors, 'because I understand that in this principality there are so many brigands and men of evil ways, daily committing murders, assassinations, robberies, and other crimes, that it is impossible to travel there without notorious risk to life'.[52] Much of the time of his viceroys in Catalonia was spent in pursuit of brigands, mobilising search-parties, patrolling the frontier, and whenever possible impressing the malefactors into *tercios* for service in the army. The problem was serious, and rendered even worse by the proximity of France.

Officially France and Spain were at peace after the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, though there was never complete confidence between the two governments. But whatever the political reservations of Philip II, his immediate preoccupation was religion. The growth of Protestantism—Calvinist, organised, and armed—in the neighbouring kingdom struck him as a direct menace to the religious unity of his own, and his anxiety to preserve his own states from contagion became obsessive. Some of his own subjects who were suspect of heresy had taken refuge across the Pyrenees,

[51] See J. Elliott, 'The King and the Catalans, 1621–1640', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, xi. (1953–55), 253–71, and 'The Catalan revolution of 1640. Some suggestions for a historical revision', *Estudios de Historia Moderna*, iv. (1954), 273–300.

[52] Reglà, *Felip II i Catalunya*, p. 125.

and in 1565 his ambassador in France warned him of a propaganda operation organised from Geneva to disseminate heretical books in Spain. On the coasts of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa the Inquisition increased its vigilance, but the weak point of Spain's defences were the mountains of Catalonia. For many years Catalonia had been a focal point of French immigration, and the source of most of this was the Midi, precisely where the Huguenots were numerous and well organised. Then there was contraband, a way of life in the Catalan Pyrenees, like brigandage to which it was allied. A popular item of contraband was horses, an article of war, whose export from Spain was forbidden; and it was suspected that many horses were going to Huguenot rebels.

The coincidence of the two factors, brigandage within Catalonia and Calvinism beyond the Pyrenees, made this Philip II's weakest frontier, and in his eyes created a problem of security. He saw a possible point of contact between the two groups of rebels, especially as the brigands were defying ecclesiastical censure. As he wrote to his viceroy in June 1566, 'the usual habitat of these people (brigands) is on the French frontier, where the danger of sowing this evil (resistance to ecclesiastical authority) is all the greater, and the means of kindling the fire so much easier'.[53] The year 1568 was a crucial year for Philip II, as has been seen. The rising of the moriscos of Granada, and the rebellion in the Low Countries, where Calvinism had penetrated into his own states, all increased the pressure on his resources. Compared with these problems the danger in Catalonia was insignificant and never a comparable threat to security. But in the context of the foreign situation it alarmed the Spanish authorities. The wars of religion had begun in France in 1562; from then on the Huguenots began to defy not only the French monarchy but also Philip II, attacking his shipping and threatening his communications with the Low Countries, where from 1566 the pressure of his own Calvinist subjects was becoming more insistent. In the circumstances it was difficult to keep a sense of proportion, especially as he was vulnerable in the Pyrenees—a kind of no-man's-land where Huguenots and brigands mixed. The frontier monasteries and bishoprics, notably the rich see of Urgel, were the targets of both: Huguenot bands penetrated the frontier in search of booty for their cause and also, it was alleged, to proselytise, while Catalan brigands plundered church wealth with the backing of a penurious gentry who had a reputation for anti-clericalism and designs on ecclesiastical property.[54] Far away in Madrid, Philip II magnified the whole situation.

[53] Philip II to Hurtado de Mendoza, 21 June 1566, *ibid.*, p. 91.
[54] *Ibid.*, pp. 85–97.

As early as May 1560 he ordered the viceroy of Catalonia, García de Toledo, to maintain the strictest vigilance on the frontier and to assist the Inquisition in its investigations there, while in the following year he ordered the religious beliefs and practices of Gascon immigrants to be examined, and even their entry to be restricted if it could be done without giving offence to the French government.[55] From 1564, when he appointed a new viceroy, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, father of the Princess of Eboli, Philip II gave repeated instructions to improve frontier fortifications, search out Huguenots, suppress brigandage, and much of the viceroy's administration was directed to these tasks. In 1568, the crisis year for Spain, Hurtado de Mendoza ordered the local authorities of the Pyrenean zone to raise all available forces in readiness for a possible attack from the 'Lutherans (sic) who have risen in France and revolted against Our Lord God and against their lord, the Most Christian King of France, and as they have such a powerful army'. In May of the same year Philip II issued an edict prohibiting the subjects of the crown of Aragon from studying in foreign universities, thus specially reinforcing in the eastern kingdoms the order which had been applied to the whole of Spain in 1559. And in July Hurtado de Mendoza relayed to all the bishops of Catalonia yet another order of the king, which stated that 'For the preservation of the Catholic faith we prohibit any French subjects of whatever condition (i.e. including priests) from teaching children in any subjects in the principality and counties'.[56] This prohibition coincided with a period of increasing French immigration; on some days, it was reported, 400 immigrants entered through the pass of Carol alone. Some of these were believed to be Protestants, the advance guard of a large-scale invasion, and anxiety was such that the viceroy himself patrolled the frontier, personally supervising defences.

By this time the government was convinced that the situation was critical, though the crisis existed largely in its own imagination. It only needed the Inquisition to distort matters further and add an element of absurdity to the whole situation. The Inquisition, like Philip himself, was alarmed by Huguenot activities on the frontier and civil disturbances in the highlands, for it was employed to combat both. It was also provoked by the knowledge that its activities had long been unpopular in Catalonia where they were regarded as an unwarranted intrusion on regional prerogatives, and met with the passive resistance of local officials and inhabitants alike. Soon it had conjured up an illusion of religious dissent in Catalonia allied to the Huguenots. Evidence was seen on all sides, but particularly in the refusal of

[55] *Ibid.*, pp. 76–77.
[56] *Ibid.*, pp. 184–87; see the same author's 'Felipe II y el bandolerismo catalan', *Hispania*, xv. (1955), 544–58.

the Catalans, voiced by the *Diputación General*, the standing committee of the cortes, to pay the *excusado*, or tax on temporalities of parishes, conceded by the pope to Philip II. In this way, with characteristic inaccuracy, the Inquisition was led to confound a constitutional issue with a religious one, and to brand as heresy the Catalans' defence of their prerogatives. They reported the matter to Rome and Madrid. In Catalonia the charge was received with a mixture of disbelief and indignation, but the local authorities were soon aware of its nature, for the municipal council of Barcelona took notice of the fact that on 29 November 1569 there arrived in Barcelona from Rome some memorials 'which had been presented in the court of Rome to His Holiness by the procurator fiscal of the Holy Office, accusing the Catalans of heresy'. But the accusation was taken seriously in Rome and Madrid, and Philip II in particular fell for the story. Conscious of his weakness in the Pyrenees, and lacking confidence in the semi-autonomous authorities in Catalonia, where the Inquisition was the only tribunal of the central government, he actually seems to have believed that Catalonia was inclining to the Protestant cause. The judgement was erroneous and ill-informed, but he acted upon it. He ordered the Deputies corporatively to ask pardon of the Inquisition, and their refusal only confirmed his suspicion. On 19 July 1569 Hurtado de Mendoza, acting under instructions, though he himself considered the charge of heresy among the Catalans to be 'very far from the truth', ordered the imprisonment of the Deputies as well as some other officials.[57] Shortly after this sensation, and when Philip II imagined that heresy had taken root in Catalonia, there was a minor Huguenot invasion in the county of Roussillon. When the viceroy called on the local nobility to raise forces to meet the attack the latter refused to acknowledge any obligation to do so, but voluntarily offered to serve the king in defence of the country.

Philip II's judgement had been warped by the religious tensions of these years and by an excess of confidence in his Inquisition. He soon realised his mistake and took measures to correct it. To clear Catalonia of the heresy charge, the city of Barcelona sent an emissary to the king, who was then in Córdoba on the occasion of the morisco rebellion—which was overcome with the help of the levies recruited in Catalonia. The mission was not difficult. On 5 March 1570 Philip wrote to the councillors of Barcelona, recognising the falsehood of the charge, and claiming, with some disingenuousness, that he had not been deceived. And the prisoners were freed.

The entire episode, for all its fantasy, was a lesson in how to govern

[57] On this incident see Reglà, *Felipe II i Catalunya*, pp. 188–96; Soldevila, *Història de Catalunya*, ii. 240.

Catalonia. The trust which Philip II placed in the Inquisition was often misplaced but usually understandable, given the conditions of his government. Any institution which operated in the whole of Spain, regardless of local restrictive rights, was valuable to the crown, and in the interests of efficiency Philip II had to take his agencies where he could find them. For both these reasons the Inquisition was an essential instrument of his government, and he expanded its authority whenever and wherever he could, especially in the eastern kingdoms and often at the expense of his secular officials. But reliance on the Inquisition had its drawbacks, for the tribunal took a partial view of affairs. In 1569, in particular, it had confused a special situation in the highlands with the question of security in Catalonia as a whole. Philip II himself never repeated the mistake. Brigandage, of course, was a permanent condition, and Huguenot pressure revived from time to time. In 1570 a large Catalan force under Hurtado de Mendoza threw back a Huguenot attack on Perpignon, and in the 1580's Philip II was ever watchful of the activities of Henry of Navarre and his Calvinist supporters.[58] But he understood that Catalonia itself was loyal and would co-operate with his government within the limits of its resources and in return for observance of its local prerogatives. As his viceroy, Manrique de Lara, reported in 1587: 'These people are obviously most loyal to Your Majesty, and deserve all credit for it; but occasionally I find them more slippery and changeable than any other nation I have seen.'[59] The view was typically Castilian; but the fact that the viceroy who made it had been sent from Castile and was accepted by the Catalans bespoke the basic harmony between Philip II and his eastern subjects. There was no reason for him to hold a trial of strength with Catalonia, as he was eventually forced to do with Aragon.

The relation between Philip II and Catalonia was vital to his international as well as his domestic interests, for Catalonia was a Mediterranean state, strategically situated between Castile and her Italian dependencies and an important base for operations against Spain's Moslem enemies. Defence of the Mediterranean was particularly urgent in the 1560's. Indeed, for the first fifteen years of his reign Philip II had to give priority to the Mediterranean. In spite of the preoccupation of his diplomacy with France and of his growing estrangement from England, the major concern of his foreign policy and the greater part of his resources were directed to defence and counter-attack against the Turk.

[58] Reglà, *Felip II i Catalunya*, p. 89.

[59] Manrique de Lara to Philip II, 11 September 1587, in Riba, *El Consejo Supremo de Aragón*, p. 126. On viceregal administration in Catalonia see Reglà, *Els segles XVI i XVII: els virreis de Catalunya* (Barcelona, 1956).

CHAPTER VII

THE WAR WITH ISLAM

1. The Morisco Problem

Two world religions faced each other in the Mediterranean, and the claims of each to dominion were absolute. Yet in Spain Christians and Moors had lived together for centuries: immediately after the reconquest Spaniards had tolerated the Moslem religion, and the church had tempered its hostility with some understanding. This attitude changed not because of the increasing intransigence of the Habsburg monarchs and their spiritual advisers but because of the growing power of Islam. During most of the sixteenth century Spain was never given the opportunity to tolerate Mohammedanism or even to accept terms of co-existence. After the rapid expansion of Ottoman power in the fifteenth century, the Christian conflict with Islam was a fight not for supremacy but for survival. In America and the Far East the driving missionary enterprise of the Counter-Reformation pushed Christianity to new frontiers. In the eastern Mediterranean, however, the frontiers of Christendom were contracting, and the impact was felt even in the west. Spain in particular was on the defensive against the encompassing surge of Islam from the Levant and North Africa. The Ottoman Turks and their allies, accurately identifying the greatest obstacle to their supremacy, waged a relentless war on the rival empire, which gave it no choice but to arm.

In the subsequent conflict it was inevitable that the first to suffer should be the partisans of Islam within Spain itself. As an isolated minority they had been tolerated; as potential allies of the national enemy they were regarded as an intolerable risk to security—a reflection of official fear rather than of oppression. The new policy was initiated in 1502, when the Moslems of Castile were given the alternative of conversion to Christianity or expulsion; in 1525 the same choice was offered to those of Aragon. In the mass conversions which followed, Mohammedanism was nominally excised from Spain, but in fact it remained to torment her for the rest of the century. For the moriscos, as the new converts were called, had accepted baptism under duress, without conviction and without instruction. They continued to form a community apart, stubbornly attached to their old religion, language, dress, and traditions. An exasperated government tried every policy it knew

for over a hundred years. Abused, indoctrinated, and favoured in turn, for ever suspect—and taxed—the moriscos were finally expelled in the dramatic decision of 1609.

The policy of repression was due essentially to repeated failures of attempts at conversion and assimilation, and as this was fundamentally a conflict of religions it was difficult to resolve. But the difficulty was aggravated by political conditions. It was taken for granted that the moriscos were in contact with national enemies. Such suspicions may have been exaggerated, but it is important to understand why they were held. For the moriscos undoubtedly presented a problem of security. Although there was no communication between the two enemy religions, the frontier separating Spain from Islam was not an iron curtain. The moriscos were a restless people and produced a constant stream of emigrants—across the Pyrenees through France and Italy to Constantinople, where they might serve the Turks as soldiers, interpreters or spies, and by sea from southern Spain to North Africa. As the Spanish authorities could not provide a continuous patrol of the entire southern and eastern coasts, they could not prevent a two-way traffic between their own territory and North Africa, nor halt the flow of refugees outwards and the smuggling of arms and ammunition inwards. Commando-type raids occurred, in which deserters returned, freed their relatives and friends, and at the same time captured Christians to sell in the Algiers market. In August 1565 raids, prepared with the help of morisco collaborators, penetrated as far as Órgiba in the kingdom of Granada.[1] Collaboration with the Barbary corsairs was also on the increase. At times there was even fraternisation between Christians and Moslems in a way that the state could hardly be expected to condone. In 1540, on the occasion of an abortive Algerian attack on Gibraltar, some eighty Christians found themselves temporarily in the hands of the corsairs; a kind of armistice was concluded and parleys were held; Algerian ships entered the port, sailors disembarked and walked in the town, looking up acquaintances among former captives or employers, and eating in the taverns; and amidst the exchange of goods and familiarities, the civilian population helped to transport fresh water needed for the enemy fleet.[2] The government's helplessness bred further fear and repression. To prevent the escape of moriscos and the raids of their allies, it tried to forbid morisco access to maritime districts, those of Andalucía in 1579 and those of Valencia in 1586. But edicts of this kind were impossible to administer along deserted coasts and without adequate guards. Illegal entrants continued to help their friends, and escape was an almost daily occurrence; and the refugees, filled with a fierce hatred

[1] Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, p. 583.
[2] *Ibid.*, 554.

of Spain and of Christianity, were powerful recruits for the Moslem cause.

Such a challenge to its authority would have taxed the resources, and the patience, of any state in the sixteenth century. But the problem was even more complex than it appears at first sight. It involved not one, but many, morisco communities, corresponding to the different regions where Moors had survived during the reconquest—in Valencia, where the moriscos formed a large peasant population subject for the past three hundred years to a land-owning nobility who became their defenders against popular resentment and state suspicion; in Castile, where they were a small minority dispersed among a large Christian population; and in Granada, where they were a conquered people who retained their own leaders and the memory of a recently lost independence.

In Valencia the towns were predominantly Christian and the moriscos were concentrated in the rural areas, especially in the highlands, where they formed an absolute majority of the population.[3] Their withdrawal to remote mountain districts was attributed by Spaniards to a desire to avoid the company of Christians, and it is true that here they were far removed from political and ecclesiastical authorities. But they had no choice, for the Christians had already appropriated the best land. The fertile *huertas* of Valencia were not, as is often imagined, morisco preserves but a virtual Christian monopoly. The inferiority of the moriscos was further emphasised by their servile condition, for they belonged to the nobility. In this part of Spain the reconquest of the thirteenth century had taken the form of surrender by the Moors, who consequently survived in large numbers with their religion tolerated. They also continued to occupy and work the land, but as this was granted by the kings of Aragon to their noble followers, the Moslem peasants became the property of the new landowners, and were then gradually pushed into the less fertile regions by incoming Christian tenants. But their ability to work even inferior land made them a fruitful source of revenue and services to their lords, who thus had a compelling reason for supporting a policy of toleration. This was ended not by the state but by the rebels of the *Germanía*, who rose against aristocratic and royal power in 1519 and began to attack the noble protectors of Moorish peasants.[4] The Moors themselves were suddenly faced with a worse dilemma than royal policy was ever to impose on them—baptism or death. In this way they were hounded into mass conversions, and it was now (1521) that they came to be called New Christians or moriscos. It was debatable, of

[3] See T. Halperin Donghi, 'Les Morisques du Royaume de Valence au XVI siècle', *Annales. Économies. Sociétés. Civilisations*, xi. (1956), 154–82.

[4] See above, pp. 46–47.

course, whether such baptisms were valid, and doubts were raised in Rome as well as in Spain; but the matter was settled to the satisfaction of the Spanish authorities in 1526 when Charles V officially recognised the conversions and sanctioned the policy which underlay them. A minority of Moors still refused to conform, and of these some were expelled. Others revolted in the wild mountains of Espadán in 1526. It was a bitter struggle, rendered worse for the authorities by the reluctance of the aristocracy to commit their forces against their own vassals. Resistance was eventually crushed, but only with the help of 3,000 German troops sent by the emperor.[5]

The rebellion showed the latent strength of the moriscos, and they managed to secure relatively moderate conditions: although the obligation to accept Christianity remained, they were allowed to retain their own customs and were exempt from the Inquisition for forty years.[6] This was a partial return towards a more tolerant policy, but it still gave no meaning to conversions which were merely official. The moriscos were Christians by force and Moors by inclination. Meanwhile, official policy became increasingly bereft of ideas. Wavering between indulgence and repression, the state seemed motivated by little more than financial considerations, for co-operative moriscos made good taxpayers. The ecclesiastical authorities, refusing to preach in Arabic and, with few exceptions, failing to sustain any programme of education, reached neither the minds nor the hearts of their new converts.[7] In spirit morisco Valencia remained part of Islam, attentive to every change in the balance of power in the Mediterranean, a nation within a nation, with its own leaders who represented its interests before the crown and frequently arranged corsair transport for those who wished to emigrate to Algiers. In the second half of the century they increased their numbers much faster than the Old Christians, a fact which did not go unnoticed and was attributed by Spaniards to the absence of ecclesiastical celibacy in the Moslem religion.[8] As a growing community they were the object of even greater suspicion. The state saw them as a risk to security,

[5] P. Boronat, *Los moriscos españoles y su expulsión* (2 vols., Valencia, 1901), i. 160.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 160–62.

[7] Halperin Donghi, 'Les Morisques du Royaume de Valence au XVI siècle', *op. cit.*, pp. 171–74.

[8] Within a general rise of population in Valencia, the moriscos increased by 69 per cent., from 18,683 families in 1563 to 31,715 in 1609, compared with the Old Christian increase of 44·7 per cent., from 44,894 families to 65,016; in 1609 the morisco population of Valencia was about 135,000. See H. Lapeyre, *Géographie de l'Espagne Morisque* (Paris, 1959), pp. 29–32, 203–04. According to a more recent estimate, the moriscos of Valencia may have increased from 85,500 in 1572, when they were 29 per cent. of the total population of the kingdom, to 143,000 in 1609, or 30.3 per cent. of the total. See Antonio Domínguez Ortiz and Bernard Vincent, *Historia de los moriscos* (Madrid, 1978), p. 76.

the church as a menace to religion, while the mass of poor Christians viewed them with a hatred born of jealousy and resentment. Only the nobles were satisfied, as their labourers—and their rents—increased. The very size of this alien community was one of the causes of its final ruin—the expulsion of 1609, a measure which had already been advocated in the Council of State in 1582.[9]

In Aragon the morisco community reproduced some of the features of that of Valencia, forming a substantial minority concentrated in one part of the country, in this case the fertile Ebro Valley, particularly around Zaragoza.[10] Here too the reconquest had followed the same lines as in Valencia, the majority of Moors remaining and working for the incoming Christians. Small groups survived in the towns as artisans and petty traders—in Zaragoza they were leatherworkers and makers of arms and gunpowder—but the greater number were to be found in the rural areas where they formed active agricultural and pastoral communities and earned the protection of their Christian lords. Many of the valleys of this region were entirely Moorish, and the conversions to Christianity at the beginning of the sixteenth century were for the most part superficial: in some villages it was said there were only three Christians—the priest, the notary, and the innkeeper. As in Valencia, the moriscos here were regarded as a security risk, but in this case it was because of their proximity to France and their alleged communications with Huguenots as well as the old suspicion of collusion with Islam. For this reason the spasmodic campaigns of the Inquisition to reconcile them to the church usually included a demand that they surrender their arms, while the feudal nobility of Aragon were anxious to preserve their bands of armed retainers. Their refusal to disarm caused alarmist rumours to circulate in 1575–76 that the moriscos were collaborating not only with the North Africans but also with French Huguenots poised on the Catalan frontier. In this way the religious problem became confounded with the problem of security in the Pyrenees, and the Inquisition tightened its frontier control in an attempt to prevent the passage of arms and emigrants. Much of the panic of these years was, of course, self-induced. Reporting to Philip II in 1575 the vice-chancellor of Aragon expressed his scepticism of alleged morisco collusion with North Africans and Huguenots, which he regarded as impracticable in both cases; in his view the Aragonese nobility kept their morisco retainers armed for the purpose of their own private feuds. In turn

[9] Boronat, *op. cit.*, i. 291–94.

[10] On the moriscos of Aragon see Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 576–79. Their number increased from 48,713 in 1575 to 61,000 in 1609, about 21 per cent. of the total population of Aragon; see Domínguez Ortiz and Vincent, *op. cit.*, pp. 77, 83.

the nobility might give their support to the moriscos in the latter's conflicts with rival agricultural communities, such as the mountain shepherds, as happened in 1585. But the problem of the moriscos must also be seen in its international context.[11] The collusion of some of them with French Huguenots—and they certainly traded in arms and gunpowder—though of little significance in itself, was alarming in existing circumstances. During the 1570's and 1580's Spanish naval and military forces were occupied on many fronts and Spanish interests exposed to many enemies; any communication, however nebulous, between the moriscos and national enemies was fearfully construed as treasonable.[12] In the quest for security, however, the Inquisition was more concerned to repress than to educate.

In Castile there was yet another morisco community, but one with features of its own. Here the problem was acute from the very beginning of the sixteenth century, as a result of the new policy of intolerance adopted by the Catholic Monarchs. In 1492 the Moorish Kingdom of Granada came to an end with the capture of the city by Ferdinand and Isabella. By the terms of the capitulation the Moors were to be allowed the free exercise of their religion, their laws, and their customs. Boabdil, the Moorish king, was given the Alpujarras as a fief for himself and his heirs in perpetuity. But the Spaniards had second thoughts, for they were unable to bring themselves to tolerate an alien religion or risk their security by permitting a bridgehead for Islam within Spain itself. Within a year, therefore, Boabdil was shipped off to Africa, and, ignoring the advice of local authorities, Cardinal Ximénez de Cisneros initiated a policy of forcible conversion. The campaign was needlessly provocative and included the burning of numerous copies of the Koran and Arabic manuscripts. The consequence was that the Moors in the Albaicín quarter of Granada rose in rebellion, and when this was crushed they were forced to accept conversion (1499). Meanwhile, the revolt had spread to the neighbouring mountains, and here resistance continued for another two years. At this point a decree was issued (11 February 1502) offering all the Moors in the Kingdom of Castile the choice between conversion and expulsion. Most of them chose the first, but, as in Valencia and Aragon, their Christianity remained purely nominal and once again the church failed to overcome the persistence of Moorish ways.

The decision taken in 1502 was applied not only to the recently conquered inhabitants of Granada, but also to the older *mudéjares*, those Moors of Castile who had long lived in the midst of Christians, freely practising their

[11] J. Reglá, 'La cuestión morisca y la coyuntura internacional en tiempos de Felipe II', *Estudios de Historia Moderna*, iii. (1953), 217–34.

[12] Boyd, *Cardinal Quiroga, Inquisitor General of Spain*, pp. 49–54.

religion. These were not important numerically, and therefore hardly a threat to security. For the reconquest in Castile had been ruthless and total: whereas Aragon had subjugated and exploited its Moors, Castile had driven them off and repopulated the land with Christian settlers. Consequently only a small Moorish minority survived, scattered over a vast area and assuming significant proportions only in Murcia and Andalucía; and they tended to concentrate in the towns, where they lived a ghetto-like existence in their ancient *morerías*. In 1575 they numbered some 30,000.

2. The War of Granada

In Granada, on the other hand, the moriscos were a more compact and a more prosperous society, and it was they who formed the most intractable element in the whole morisco problem. In the town of Granada and the eastern half of the kingdom a native Moorish society survived, powerful—and growing—in numbers, and with a governing class of its own. This recently independent people was bound to resent any attack on its basic conditions of living. Politically, the kingdom of Granada was simply annexed to Castile in 1492 and preserved no autonomous rights. It obtained a voice in the cortes, but this meant very little. The intention of Castile, in fact, was to absorb and assimilate Granada as quickly as possible. After the reconquest Christian lords were installed in its rich and highly developed lands. Officials and clergy followed, some less honest than others but all enjoying the advantages of the country. Here was a 'colonialism' within Spain itself—a new settler class, a subject population, civil and military oppression.[13] Not all of this was done in the name of religion: much of it was clearly the result of a 'rush' to a new acquisition which was economically attractive. Indeed, like the Indians in the New World, the moriscos had their protectors, such as the saintly Hernando de Talavera, first archbishop of Granada, who devoted his life to converting the Moors through sympathy and understanding, and the Mondéjar family, hereditary captains-general of Granada, who frequently risked office and reputation defending moriscos.[14] But official policy was not consistent, and the moriscos were alternately persecuted out of frustration and ignored in return for heavy subsidies.

The economy of the moriscos of Granada, like that of their Moorish predecessors, lay chiefly in the silk trade with Italy. Granada, as well as Almería and Málaga, had factories which turned out fine silks, and there were looms in most of the villages. Silk was almost the sole cash crop in

[13] Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 580–81.
[14] H. C. Lea, *The Moriscos of Spain* (Philadelphia, 1901), p. 212.

the Alpujarras; since cocoons weighed little, they could be transported at small expense on mule-back, and the mountains had long been thickly planted with mulberry trees. Silk production and manufacture, therefore, were fruitful sources of taxation and ones which the crown exploited to the full; in addition, subsidy was added to subsidy as the moriscos desperately bought off royal attentions.[15] Pressure on morisco land was also increasing. From 1559 agents of the crown were checking on all title deeds in order to reclaim crown lands; those who could not produce legal evidence of ownership had to pay a composition fee to the crown or have their land confiscated and resold. Consequently, the moriscos needed their Arabic title-deeds more than ever at the very time when the campaign against their language and culture was reaching its peak.

Yet the crisis in relations between the state and the moriscos of Granada which grew to a climax in the 1560's was not exclusively a Spanish responsibility. Across the Mediterranean, in North Africa, Algiers waged religious and economic war on Spain, and threatened not only her shipping but her coastal security. The source of Turkish pressure was more distant but more powerful, and the combined forces of Islam seemed to engulf the entire Mediterranean. The danger became more acute than ever in the 1560's. The Turks began to penetrate into the western Mediterranean, and in 1565 they besieged Malta. This was accompanied by a growth in the frequency and scope of corsair attacks on the Granadine coastline, from their bases in Tetuán, Cherchell, and Algiers. In 1558, a force of 4,000 attacked Berja; in 1559, 150 Algerian Turks attacked the castle of Fuengirola; in 1560, morisco corsairs disembarked at Castil de Ferro and evacuated the inhabitants of the village of Notaes. But the most spectacular raid was that made on Órgiba in the winter of 1565, when corsairs from Tetuán beat Spanish regular troops in a running fight, marched 20 miles inland, carried off several hundred moriscos, and re-embarked in safety.[16]

The moriscos themselves gave cause for anxiety on grounds of security, internal and external.[17] Banditry and piracy were endemic among them. In the 1560's bandits variously called *bandoleros*, *salteadores* and *monfíes*, according to region, were active in all morisco Spain, in Aragon, where they

[15] Two of the leaders of the 1569 rebellion were connected with the dyeing trade: Aben Aboo was a dyer, and Aben Farax, the leader of the Christmas night raid on the Albaicín, a dyer's journeyman. See K. Garrad. 'The Original Memorial of Don Francisco Núñez Muley', *Atlante*, ii. (1954), p. 223 n. 4.
[16] Braudel, *op. cit.*, p. 583; Garrad, 'The Original Memorial of Don Francisco Núñez Muley', *op. cit.*, p. 203.
[17] Domínguez Ortiz and Vincent, *op. cit.*, pp. 29–31, 39, 78–80; Andrew C. Hess, 'The Moriscos: An Ottoman Fifth Column in Sixteenth-century Spain', *American Historical Review*, 74, 1 (1968), 1–25; Garrad, *op. cit.*, p. 203 n. 6.

operated in collusion with French Huguenots, in Valencia, where nobles organised their morisco vassals into private armies, and in Andalucía, where *monfíes* openly fought Christians. Morisco pirates haunted the coasts of Valencia and Andalucia, with almost total impunity. And all this time the moriscos kept arms, openly or in secret, in spite of the surveillance of the authorities. As the Moslem campaign grew in intensity, the moriscos entered into subversive communication with the Cherifs of Morocco, the pirates of Tetuán, and the Sultan of Constantinople. The Ottomans sought to use moriscos as a fifth column and, while diverting Spanish efforts to internal security, to take some of their major objectives such as Cyprus and Tunis. A morisco tortured by the Inquisition in 1565 revealed that morisco spies sent information to the Turk via Lyons, and that the moriscos were ready to seize ports along the coast of Granada if the Turk captured Malta. Morisco spies were sent to Malta from Constantinople to collect information about Spanish naval strength. In isolation these were petty incidents, but in view of the known strength of the enemy and the inadequacy of their own defences, it was natural that the Spanish authorities should believe a collusive action was building up, in which Granada was designed as a bridgehead for a Moslem invasion of Spain. There were 150,000 moriscos in the kingdom of Granada in the 1560's, compared with 125,000 Christians. No one doubted that the morisco majority was a power in the land.

The crisis in Granada, therefore, had wider roots than the growth of the morisco population and its oppression at the hands of officials and Old Christians. The hatred and suspicion directed towards the moriscos increased in proportion to the danger from Turkey, real or imagined, and became overpowering once the siege of Malta had begun.[18] Hatred was fed from other sources, it is true—from a popular resentment of the successful morisco artisan and trader, and from knowledge among Christians that the Koran and not the Bible was the principal sacred text in Granada. But these were old scores. The issue was brought to a head in the 1560's primarily because of official concern for security. The very success of Islam outside of Spain brought heavy retribution on its partisans within.

Tension was already acute even before the government took action, and its own ineptitude was merely the last straw. In November 1566 Inquisitor general Diego de Espinosa prepared with Philip II an edict imposing various prohibitions on the moriscos. On New Year's Day of 1567, the eve of the anniversary of the Catholic Monarchs' triumphal entry into Granada in 1492, Pedro de Deza, who had been appointed President of the Audiencia of Granada precisely for the purpose, proclaimed the edict and began to

[18] Braudel, *op. cit.*, 586–87.

enforce its provisions. By the new law the moriscos of Granada were required to learn Spanish within three years, and from then onwards it would be a crime to speak, read, or write Arabic, in public or in private; they were also required to abandon their native costumes, their Moorish surnames, their customs and their ceremonies; and they were forbidden the use of their baths, on the ground that they provided opportunity for practising the ritual ablutions prescribed in the Koran—indeed the campaign was begun by Deza's removing the beautiful Alhambra baths. The intention behind these measures was to denationalise the moriscos and make them Spanish Catholics, and the folly of it was that the authorities believed this could be done by government decree. Nor had they even prepared for opposition. For the moment, certainly, the moriscos seemed content to negotiate, as they had done in the past, in the belief that a reprieve could be bought as usual. Their procurator, Jorge de Baeza, went to Madrid to remonstrate with Philip II, while their elder statesman, Francisco Núñez Muley, presented a memorandum to Deza, in which he protested their past and present loyalty in face of bitter persecution, and argued that from the religious point of view the morisco usages and traditions condemned by the edict were of a purely regional nature not incompatible with Christian doctrine, while economically trade would be disrupted and royal revenue would suffer if the edict were enforced. These arguments had proved successful in the past, especially with the more tolerant—or more penurious—administration of Charles V. But they had little effect on Philip II, who, as Deza informed Núñez Muley, 'valued religion more than revenue'.[19] He might have added that the political situation in the Mediterranean was no longer propitious for toleration.

Negotiations lasted for a year, and when the moriscos realised their futility, all the pent-up resentment they nurtured suddenly exploded, and they decided once more to revolt. The date they chose was Christmas Eve, 1568, and although the insurgents failed to raise the Albaicín they quickly spread the revolt in the mountains of the Alpujarras, between the Sierra Nevada and the coast. Indeed the revolt had its true base in the mountains. From there it spread to the plains, but not to all parts. It was essentially a rural movement and the towns were less committed, more integrated perhaps with Christian Spain. The leader of the moriscos, Fernando de Valor, was of old Arab stock, a descendant of the Caliphs of Córdoba;

[19] The memorial of Núñez Muley is printed by Garrad, *op. cit.*, pp. 204–26. For the reply of Deza see Luís del Marmol Carvajal, *Rebelión y Castigo de los Moriscos de Granada* (1606) (Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, Madrid, 1852), p. 166; this and Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada* (B.A.E., Madrid, 1852) are the classical narrative sources of the rebellion and war.

reverting to his Arab name of Aben Omeyya, he was proclaimed king under an olive tree. A year later he was assassinated, and his cousin Aben Aboo became king in his place. Leaders such as Aben Daud, Aben Farax, and Aben Aboo were Granadine moriscos, but most of the others and especially the commanders in the field were from the mountains. The mountain chiefs came from the traditional social hierarchy of the moriscos and identified more easily with their cause, in contrast to the urban upper class which had become more integrated with the conquerers and less close to the morisco masses. In the social structure of the movement family solidarity counted for as much as economic or political calculation, and whole clans held together in support of the rebellion, or in loyalty to the crown. Beyond the economic and social motives, this was a minority fighting for its identity in an alien Spain. Families previously enemies came together in a common cause. The movement began with 4,000 insurgents in January 1569, rose to 30,000 at the height of mobilisation, and numbered 25,000 in the spring of 1570, of whom 4,000 were Turks and Berbers. These numbers, compared to a Christian force of 20,000 at its peak, testify to great participation among the morisco masses.[20]

The moriscos of Granada soon established contact with their allies in Valencia. And a number of missions were sent to North African countries, to Algiers and Tetuán, and also to Constantinople, seeking help and military support. From Algiers they received volunteers, munitions, and food supplies, Christian captives serving as payment. Algiers had a religious interest in the war of Granada, and the numerous arms gathered for the rebels were assembled in an Algerian mosque. But it also profited from it; while Spain was thus immobilised, Euldj Ali took Tunis in 1570. The Turks seized their opportunity too. The Sultan Selim II regarded the moriscos as allies within the enemy lines and he would have sent more arms and men if he had not had commitments elsewhere; his intervention was certainly envisaged in Madrid. But the Sultan preferred to use the occasion to pursue his immediate interests in the eastern Mediterranean, and although his fleet left port it was to attack Cyprus, not to help the moriscos.

Even without Turkish intervention, however, these were critical years for Spain. The government was caught unprepared in Granada. Although it had sanctioned the policy of its officials and the campaigns of the Inquisition, the last thing it seems to have considered was military preparedness. Indeed, the south of Spain had recently been stripped of regular troops in order to swell the *tercios* of the Duke of Alba in the Low Countries, where Philip II had an even greater rebellion on his hands. Consequently, Spain entered

[20] Domínguez Ortiz and Vincent, *op. cit.*, pp. 39–50.

the war of Granada at a time when her resources were stretched to the limit and her interests widely exposed. Then, during the first year of hostilities, she was paralysed by indecision over methods of campaigning. It was difficult to reach the rebels in their mountain fastnesses, and to cut off their allies along the coast; for although the Spanish galleys were alerted it was impossible to blockade the long coast-line of rebel territory with its innumerable coves and its accessibility to the ships of Algiers. In these circumstances the war became a long and confused process of patrols and ambushes, fought with a mutual savagery which was born of desperation among the moriscos and of weakness among the Spaniards. The *monfíes*—morisco brigands who roamed the Sierra Nevada in bands and terrorised whole districts even in peacetime—were fanatical Moslems who killed and tortured every priest they could catch. When the moriscos conquered Serón they killed 150 men and reduced 80 women to slavery. The Spaniards retaliated indiscriminately. On 3 February 1569 Francisco de Córdoba led 800 men in the assault of the rocky promontory of Inox, near Almería. The Christians made their way against a deluge of projectiles, and eventually broke the resistance of the moriscos, killing 400, taking 50 prisoners for the galleys, and reducing 2,700 women and children to slavery. A few days later the marquis of Mondéjar captured the fort of Guajar after a firece struggle and put to the sword everyone there, men and women. Morisco property was invariably taken as booty. It was only from January 1570 that the Spanish commander, Don John of Austria, impelled by fear of Moorish intervention from abroad, decided on a full-scale campaign with regular troops from Italy and eastern Spain in place of the Andalusian militia. This was combined with a policy of expulsion in the lowlands in order to cut off the mountain rebels from their supplies and accomplices. Following a decree of June 1569, 3,500 moriscos from the town of Granada were herded out of their homeland and dispersed throughout La Mancha. Starved of support, ruthlessly pursued, and in the final stages smoked out of their caves to a brutal death, the rebels in the mountains were crushed into submission in the course of 1570. The closing scene took place in a cave at Berchules, where Aben Aboo was stabbed to death by his own followers.

The revolt had lasted two years and strained the resources of the country to the utmost. The settlement, therefore, was bound to be hard. It was decided to deport all the moriscos of the kingdom of Granada, whether they had risen or not, inland to other parts of Spain. On 28 October 1570 orders were issued for the evacuation, and Don John fixed 1 November as the date of assembly; chained and fettered the moriscos were led in long convoys towards the towns and villages of Extremadura, Galicia, La Mancha, and Old Castile. Of the 80,000 deportees in 1569–71 not all reached their

destination; the arduous winter journey took a heavy toll of life, and their ranks were depleted by at least 20 per cent. and perhaps 30 per cent. before the resettlement was completed.[21] A further 3–4,000 were deported in 1584–85. Even so, the expulsion was not total, and in 1587 about 10,000 moriscos were still living in Granada.

The problem of Granada seemed to be solved at last. To fill the vacuum caused by this immense migration, the empty lands were confiscated by the crown and offered on favourable terms, together with cattle and tools, to colonists recruited in Galicia, Asturias, and the regions of León and Burgos. Within a few years about 12,500 families came to find their New World in Granada and occupied 270 of the 400 villages and hamlets which had been abandoned. Yet the results were not completely successful. The crown itself made some profit out of the transaction: from confiscations and sales—to poor settlers, to magnates, to monasteries and churches—it received a substantial income.[22] But in Granada itself new problems were created and old ones revived. Among the lands offered, many were of poor quality, situated in the Alpujarras and other mountain districts, for the Old Christians already occupied the best *vegas* in the plains. Disappointed in their expectations, many of the new settlers were discouraged and left.[23] Of the villages still abandoned some were very small or had been burned during the fighting, but others lay in coastal districts which remained empty and uninhabited owing to the fear of corsairs. Consequently, although the Christian population of Granada was substantial and increasing, the Alpujarras and the neighbouring coastal district were much less peopled than they had been and thus continued to provide a problem of internal security. Moreover, many of the new immigrants, coming as they did from remote mountain villages in a region which had never been occupied by the Moors, were often scarcely more Christian than their morisco predecessors. An ecclesiastical historian of the seventeenth century notes that

> it is not surprising that the inhabitants of the Alpujarras have abandoned their ancient faith. Those who live in these mountains are Old Christians; they have not a drop of impure blood in their veins; they are subjects of a Catholic king; and yet, for want of teachers, and as a result of the oppressions to which they are subject, they are so ignorant of what they ought to know to obtain eternal salvation, that they hardly retain a few vestiges of the Christian religion. Do you think that if today, which God forbid, the Infidels made themselves masters of their country, these people would long delay in abandoning their faith and embracing the beliefs of the conquerors?[24]

[21] J. Caro Baroja, *Los moriscos del reino de Granada* (Madrid, 1957), pp. 57–85; Lapeyre, *Géographie de l'Espagne Morisque*, pp. 124–25; Domínguez Ortiz and Vincent, *op. cit.*, pp. 50–56.

[22] Merriman, *The Rise of the Spanish Empire*, iv. 95.

[23] See F. Oriol Catena, 'La repoblación del reino de Granada después de la expulsión de los moriscos', *Boletín de la Universidad de Granada*, vii. (1935), 305–31, 499–528.

Without really solving anything in Granada, the policy of deportation only aggravated the morisco problem by extending it to the whole of Castile. Prolific, active, and resourceful, the Granadine moriscos were not welcome among their neighbours, and the task of assimilating them and making them Catholics and Spaniards was insuperable. Spanish opinion became increasingly hostile as it became more aware of their existence. One of Philip II's officials declared in 1588: 'We must count all the moriscos avowed enemies, both those originally in Castile and those recently dispersed from Granada . . . who are as Moorish as those in Africa.'[25] Later official opinion, after the reign of Philip II, considered the entire policy of dispersion an error of judgement: 'It was a great mistake to expel the moriscos of Castile from the Alpujarras; it would have been better to have kept them there under guard, at their own expense, rather than distribute them throughout the kingdom.'[26] For the next forty years they were a constant preoccupation of the government, as can be seen from the regular reports of their numbers and location demanded of *corregidores* and religious authorities. The intention had been to spread them thinly over a wide area. But they tended to leave their allotted districts, and their wandering urges made it difficult to keep track of them. Not all of the designated areas received their true quota: few reached Galicia and Old Castile, but New Castile, La Mancha and Andalucía had heavy intakes. Within these areas they gravitated towards the towns, where there were greater opportunities and perhaps less obvious restrictions. Many of them even made their way back to Granada, and there had to be a further minor expulsion in 1584. Hounded by the authorities and remembering their harsh treatment in 1570, the embittered Granadine moriscos became more recalcitrant as the years passed. Out of the frustration of their new life came criminal tendencies, and some of them joined outlaw gangs to live by robbery and violence. And ironically they still played on the nerves of the government, this time in a new context: from 1589 there were chronic, if irrational, fears of a rising in Andalucía in liaison with English invaders.

[24] Francisco Bermúdez de Pedraza, *Historia eclesiástica de Granada* (1637), quoted in A. Dozy, *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne* (4 vols., Leyde, 1861), ii. 45 n. 1.

[25] Boronat, *op. cit.*, i. 635.

[26] Duke of Lerma, 1608, *ibid.*, ii. 469.

And yet in the whole of Castile there were only about 80,000 moriscos out of a total population of about seven millions.[27] Why should an oppressed minority cause so much panic and resentment? The official reasons were not necessarily the most compelling ones. Churchmen, it is true, denounced their indifference to Christianity and their secret attachment to the ways of Islam; soldiers and officials were still preoccupied with possible insurrection and treason with external enemies. But public opinion was inflamed by more prosaic reasons than these. What most Spaniards resented in the moriscos was their sobriety, enterprise, avarice—and their increasing numbers. Cervantes, as usual, accurately reflected popular sentiments:

> It would be a miracle to find among so many people even one who believes sincerely in the sacred Christian faith. Their sole aim is to coin money and then keep it, and in order to gain they work and do not eat. When a *real* enters into their possession, provided it be not a worthless one, they condemn it to perpetual imprisonment and eternal obscurity; so that always gaining and never spending, they accumulate the greater part of the money that there is in Spain. They are its money-bags, its moth, its magpies, and its weasels. They gather everything, they hide everything, and they swallow everything . . . There is no chastity among them, and neither men nor women enter the religious life. They all of them marry, they all multiply, because sober living augments the causes of generation. War does not consume them, nor any occupation overtask them. They rob us quietly and easily, and with the fruits of our inheritance which they resell to us they wax rich.[28]

To the mass of the population moriscos were odious because they evaded national responsibilities in religion and war, and quietly increased their numbers. Above all, they earned too much and spent too little. These allegations were not necessarily true; at least there is no statistical evidence that population growth among the moriscos was due to their evasion of national responsibilities. Moreover, their economic situation varied from region to region, and from group to group among themselves, for they too had their social structure. In Valencia and Aragon the moriscos were rural workers, many of them subject to seigneurial exactions, and most of them poor. The moriscos of Castile and those who managed to stay in Granada were better off and a few were affluent. Most of the moriscos of Castile were occupied not on the land but as small traders, artisans, and muleteers. These jobs were not highly regarded in Spain and not necessarily very remunerative.

[27] Lapeyre, *Géographie de l'Espagne Morisque*, p. 130.
[28] *Coloquio de los perros*, in *Novelas ejemplares*.

But the moriscos made them more profitable than they usually were; some of them acquired substantial fortunes and provoked a jealousy which was then extended to their entire community. They were also thought to corner vital supplies and charge high prices. Finally, they were content with a lower standard of living than the majority of Spaniards; as a report of the Inquisitor of Valencia noted in 1582, 'it is known from experience that a family of old Christians needs as much for its sustenance as two families of moriscos'.[29] Consequently, although the industry of the moriscos has been exaggerated and they were by no means the only workers in Spain, their resourcefulness was beyond doubt, and their survival was an affront to Spanish sensibilities.

And yet, in the final analysis, what made moriscos different from the rest of Spaniards was their religion. As the archbishop of Toledo declared, 'they are true Mohammedans, like those of Algiers'.[30] The accusation may have been intolerant, but it was also true. The moriscos remained unadapted and unadaptable. Spain, which began the modern period of its history by tolerating a large heterodox minority—a unique, though brief, record in the sixteenth century—ended by trying to force it into submission and finally admitted defeat. The policy of expulsion adopted in 1609 was a reflection of impotence.

3. The Defence of the Mediterranean

The morisco problem was only one aspect of the Spanish struggle with Islam. In the Mediterranean Spain was on the defensive against the combined power of the Ottoman empire and its allies in North Africa. Hence she had to maintain her scattered possessions in North Africa, to defend her own coasts and those of her Mediterranean dominions, to protect her commerce and shipping, and to contain the westward expansion of the Ottoman Turks. From his improvident father Philip II had inherited all these problems unresolved, together with a naval force unequal to its commitments.[31] At the time this was still the area where Spanish interests were most dangerously exposed. Consequently, for the first twenty years of his reign the main concern of Spanish foreign policy was not the problem of Protestantism nor relations with northern Europe, but defence and counter-attack against Islam in the Mediterranean.

The source of Moslem power was Turkey, and its leader Suleiman the

[29] Boronat, *op. cit.*, i. 596.
[30] Quoted in Braudel, *op. cit.*, p. 593. On the religion of the moriscos see P. Longás, *Vida religiosa de los moriscos* (Madrid, 1915).
[31] See above, pp. 79–80, 92–98.

run the risk of provoking the Turk to hit back; Philip II took the risk because he counted on the Turkish fleet being immobilised for distant operations by loss of its ally, France; in doing so he made a serious miscalculation. Worse still, and against his better judgement, he allowed the operation to outgrow his original objective. His own intention had been to launch a light and rapid raid while the season was good—the kind of operation the corsairs themselves performed so adroitly. But the Duke of Medina Celi, viceroy of Sicily, wished to lead a glorious expedition against the infidel, and envisaged an old-fashioned operation on a larger and more ponderous scale. Between the two, it took six months to assemble all the ships, troops, and stores from Spain's various dominions—a classical example of the difficulties of communications in the Spanish empire—and concentrate them at Messina and Syracuse. By then the element of surprise had gone: Dragut was ready, and so was the Turkish fleet. And as the unwieldy force, inexpertly commanded on its naval side by Gian Andrea Doria, a shadow of his distinguished uncle, slowly made its long publicised way to Tripoli, they were given yet further time to prepare their reply. For it was folly to sail in December, and the weather forced the fleet to halt at Malta. Then, having given Dragut the opportunity to escape from Djerba to Tripoli, the Spaniards decided it would be easier to attack the former and thus take the island instead of the town, gaining a base for further operations. The expeditionary force disembarked on 7 March 1560 without incident. It thus placed itself in an impossible position and revealed the error of judgement on which the entire enterprise was based. It immediately became dependent on the sea for supplies—at a time when Turkish naval supremacy was undisputed. Piali Pasha proceeded to give Spain a lesson in naval warfare. With astonishing speed he took the Turkish fleet out of Constantinople in April and attacked on 12 May. Paralysed by indecision and handicapped by their inferior forces, the Spanish commanders sacrificed everything to escape. In the ensuing panic they lost forty-two out of their eighty vessels. Though Doria and Medina Celi were among those who managed to slip away, thousands of troops remained in the fort, besieged by the Turkish fleet. Philip II decided to abandon them, arguing that they had longer supplies than the enemy. But in fact they were at the mercy of the Turk, and water shortage forced them to capitulate on 31 July. Spain thus lost 18,000 men, and the Turkish fleet returned in triumph to Constantinople with its haul of ships and prisoners.

Djerba was an utter disaster from which little was retrieved, an immense blow to Spanish prestige and power, and a major victory to Islam in the fight for control of the central Mediterranean. But it was also a lesson. It was now clear to Philip II that he could not contain the Turk, or even hold

the coasts of his Mediterranean states, without a powerful naval force. From 1560 he began his programme of naval rearmament in the ports and docks of Sicily, Italy, and Catalonia.[35] Just after the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis Spain's Mediterranean fleet consisted of about ninety vessels, divided mainly between four squadrons of galleys—those of Spain, Naples, Sicily and the hired Genoese unit. Many of these were lost at Djerba, but between 1560 and 1564 the squadrons were remobilised and remanned. Italian shipyards responded quickly to the new demand, but this had to be paid for; in 1560 Philip II received a subsidy from the pope in the form of a tax on the Spanish clergy, in addition to the *cruzada*. As the defence of Christendom was also involved Philip II expected aid from his Italian allies—Savoy, Florence, and Genoa—as well as from Portugal, but they preferred to hire out their vessels, so these too had to be paid for. Consequently, he initiated a renewed effort by Spain herself. From 1561 production was revived in the shipyards of Barcelona, with the help of Genoese and Basque technicians. In December 1562 the cortes of Castile were specially convoked for an extraordinary subsidy to finance the naval programme.[36] The result of these efforts was that by September 1564 García de Toledo, commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean fleet, disposed of about 100 galleys between the coasts of Spain and Africa.

The inexplicable respite provided by the Turk in these years enabled Philip II to try out his new forces against the corsairs. The great Algerian offensive against Oran, one of the most important Spanish possessions, was repulsed after a siege which lasted two months (April–June 1563). The garrison was relieved and the squadron of Hassan Barbarossa decisively beaten. But more important than the victory was the way in which it was won. Profiting again from the lesson of Djerba, Philip II organised his relief action promptly and effectively. Co-ordinating his various resources, ordering the galleys from Italy, assembling them in Cartagena, dispatching them quickly, he overcame the tremendous obstacles of communication with an efficiency which belies the traditional picture of his slowness and caution. Thanks to his initiative, by 1564 Spain was able to take the offensive in the western Mediterranean, which he regarded as a minimum requirement, especially after the defeat of Djerba. For he had still not decided to measure himself with the Turk or hasten the great struggle into which he was later drawn.[37] In any case there were still defence gaps to be filled and defects of organisation to improve. In May 1565 the Turkish fleet suddenly arrived off Malta, the island of the Knights of St. John whom Suleiman had already

[35] Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 813–28. [36] Duro, *Armada española*, ii. 49.
[37] Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 841–43.

expelled from Rhodes and Tripoli. It had been suspected for some time that his fleet would move westward, but its destination was uncertain; yet in spite of repeated warnings, those responsible for the defence of the island —the Spanish authorities and the Grand Master of the Knights—were taken unawares by the rapidity of the attack. The Knights defended their charge with spirit but could not prevent the Turk landing 25,000 troops and overrunning the island. Confined to a few forts, the defenders resisted fierce Turkish onslaughts for almost four months, but by September they were near the end of their resources. Yet where was the relief force all this time? Philip II has been criticised for typical vacillation in an emergency. The Spanish response was certainly slow, but this must be measured against the obstacles of distance and organisation. García de Toledo was unwilling to improvise and commit his forces piecemeal against the Turk; he preferred to employ a single and powerful fleet in one blow. But this took time to assemble, and in these conditions Spanish machinery and the collaboration of Philip II and his commander stood the test remarkably well. This was proved by the result. García de Toledo took his relief force of Spanish infantry from Naples and Sicily and struck the Turks decisively: in a brief campaign they were routed from the island.

The years 1559 to 1565 were the last period of undisputed Turkish supremacy. The victory of Malta gave a new impetus to the Spanish revival. From 1565 the programme of naval reconstruction in Barcelona, Naples, and Sicily was intensified. Having temporarily blocked the Turkish route westward, Spain could now deal with the corsairs in isolation and assure some freedom of navigation. In 1566 Suleiman the Magnificent died, and the Ottoman empire passed into the weaker hands of Selim II. But if this was the beginning of the end for Turkey, Philip II showed no inclination to hasten the process. With rare discrimination he kept his policy to the strictest limits of defence and refused to anticipate his prospects. It must be said, also, that circumstances in the second half of the 1560's prevented him from giving his undivided attention to the Mediterranean, or from taking immediate advantage of his more favourable position there. From 1566 the Low Countries began to impinge more urgently on Spanish policy and to pull it towards the north. And once Philip II decided that the challenge to his authority there could only be met by force he put the full weight of Spanish military power behind his decision. But this involved stripping his Mediterranean defences of their best troops as well as diverting his financial resources, for the veteran *tercios* of Naples, Lombardy and Sicily formed the core of the Duke of Alba's army and were posted to Ghent, Liége and Brussels.[38] After this he had no alternative but to proceed with caution in

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 873.

the Mediterranean. It was the double charge on Spanish policy, and not the defects of personality which historians are so anxious to find in Philip II, that accounts for his apparent hesitancy. He did not have sufficient resources to perform both tasks thoroughly and quickly, or fulfil all the demands made on him. The pope was urging a league against the Turk, but distracted by the Low Countries and anxious not to provoke Protestant susceptibilities by a spectacular alliance at the very time he was moving a huge expeditionary force to northern Europe, Philip could not co-operate. At the same time he did not have a choice of alternatives—the Mediterranean or the Low Countries. Spain always had to fight the Turk, for she always had to defend herself. But an outright offensive against the infidel was a different matter —this was precluded by Spain's commitments in the Low Countries and the opportunity which these gave her enemies in northern Europe.

During 1567 and 1568, therefore, the Mediterranean became temporarily a secondary theatre of war, partly because of the new diversion and partly because the Sultan himself provided a brief respite. Selim II suffered heavy losses in the Hungary campaign of 1566, and in 1568 he signed an eight years' truce with the Emperor; perhaps he himself wanted to be free in order to prepare his impending attack on Venice and Cyprus. Spain was thankful for another breathing-space, especially as from 1569 she had a second revolt on her hands—in Granada. The Low Countries were already consuming troops and money, and this left Italy and Spain wide open to a Turkish fleet, which had an additional temptation—and bridge-head—in Granada. The years 1569–70, therefore, were years of crisis for Spain, perhaps her greatest crisis in the sixteenth century. The prospect of a crusade against Islam was remote indeed.

4. Lepanto and After

In July 1570 a Turkish force landed on Cyprus, and on 9 September Nicosia fell. Cyprus was a Venetian possession, and with its sugar plantations and its salt mines, its cotton and wine production, it was a valuable one. So Venice was forced to rearm and start looking for allies. With his forces tied down in Granada and the Low Countries, Philip II's first thoughts were nearer home, and he began to improve his defences in Italy and North Africa. Then, pressed by the papacy as well as by Venice, he reluctantly ordered his fleet east in an attempt to save Cyprus. The Spanish vessels joined a hastily improvised force consisting of Venetian, Genoese, and papal units, which sailed in September 1570. It never reached its destination. Torn by distrust among the various nationalities, shaken by severe weather, and paralysed by news of further Turkish success in Cyprus, the fleet returned

demoralised to its base.[39] The projected Christian alliance had received a serious setback.

Alone, Venice was helpless. She was a naval power to be reckoned with—though her reserve fleet was in dry dock—but she did not have the men or the provisions to fight a large-scale war with the Turk. Her interest, therefore, was to align with the west and make her local war a general one in which Christendom itself had a stake. On the other hand, Venice had more reason to come to terms with the Turk than to fight him, for she preferred to keep her trade routes open by commercial treaties with the Sultan. Her trading interests included not only the distribution of the silks, cottons, and spices of the Far East, which she picked up in Alexandria and the ports of Syria and Asia Minor, but also the provision of her own vital grain supplies. For her national territory was insufficient to feed her large population, and rather than rely on rival states in Italy she procured her cereals from southern Russia or the Balkans; the Turk was thus in a position to cut her commercial life-line and threaten her with famine. For these reasons Venice traditionally avoided anti-Turkish coalitions and naturally fought shy of Spain. Indeed, she usually wanted the best of both worlds—an understanding with the Turk in good times, and the protection of the west, which meant Spain, in times of emergency. And from any alliance she usually defected as quickly as possible. In 1570, however, she could hardly remain aloof, sheltering under the cover of the two great rivals, when one of them had begun to attack her.

Now that she wanted a Spanish alliance, Venice found it difficult to get. The realism and absence of crusading spirit in Philip II's policy has already been noticed. He had never officially withdrawn from the endless war with the Turk, for he continued to receive the precious subsidies from Rome, but he had shown his readiness to accept a tacit *détente* and his unwillingness to indulge in speculative offensives. In this he was supported by his ministers; when news from Cyprus first arrived Cardinal Granvelle, who represented Philip II in Rome, advised the king against giving any assistance to Venice. In fact there would have been a stalemate, with each party looking to its own interest, had not the pope brought them together and persuaded them into commitment.

Pius V was an enigma to Philip II and his ministers. Political popes they understood, but a saint confounded them. Various features mingled in the vigorous personality of the seventy-three-year-old Dominican.[41] A deeply

[39] L. Serrano, *La Liga de Lepanto entre España, Venecia y la Santa Sede, 1570–1573* (2 vols., Madrid, 1918–20), i. 68–84.
[40] Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 916–32.
[41] For an estimate of Pius V see Serrano, *op. cit.*, i. 31–33.

spiritual man, a theologian, simple and politically inexperienced, he refused to admit that 'reasons of state' should decide political and religious affairs. Having fought heresy in Italy as Grand Inquisitor and reformed the church in Rome itself, he then projected his religious feelings into plans of crusade against Protestantism and Islam, to be sanctioned by armed force wielded by a Christian league. The pope who excommunicated Elizabeth I was unlikely to be deterred, or impressed, by the national interests of Spain and Venice. He refused to consider the commercial calculations with which Venice was preoccupied, and the diverse commitments of Philip II meant nothing to him. But although he fought the Spanish king bitterly over ecclesiastical jurisdiction, he had long admitted that he was the only ruler on whom he could rely for a league against Islam. Neither the king of France, who had pro-Turkish ties, nor the emperor Maximilian II, who had an uneasy truce with the Sultan, would listen to his pleas. He therefore concentrated on Spain, offering renewed subsidies to Philip II, and sending his representative, Luís de Torres, to open negotiations. Meanwhile, he himself began to organise a papal fleet.

The negotiations were slow, for Pius V was demanding not mere assistance for the immediate occasion but a general league against the Turk with massive striking power. 'It is clear', said the instructions of Torres, to be repeated to Philip II, 'that one of the principal reasons which has driven the Turk to break with the Venetians is that he believes he will find them alone, without hope of allying themselves with Your Majesty, occupied as he is with the Moors of Granada and unable to cope with both.'[42]

Certainly the Sultan had counted on the diversion in Granada to protect him from Philip II. But here he had miscalculated: one of the reasons why Spain finally accepted the project of a league was because her passions had been roused by the revival of the old struggle with Islam in the Peninsula itself. Political and financial considerations, of course, also played their part. As the pope himself argued, the frontier defences of Venice in the Mediterranean were ultimately those of Spain herself, and a league would give Philip II the services of the fleet, the men, and the arms of his ally. Moreover, the unrenewed *cruzada*—a loss of 400,000 ducats a year to the Spanish king—was now conceded by the pope, and this was the kind of argument which Philip II appreciated. For all these reasons he gave his agreement in principle eight days after Torres had rehearsed his lengthy arguments. The decision was one of the most difficult he ever made, but he himself was not unaware of the favourable circumstances in the years 1570–71 which suddenly—and

[42] *Ibid.*, i. 53; on the mission of Torres see also L. Pastor, *History of the Popes from the close of the Middle Ages*, xviii. 369–73.

exceptionally—enabled him to engage Spain up to the hilt in a single objective. At last the Low Countries seemed firmly held under the iron rule of the Duke of Alba; England had internal distractions of her own in the northern rebellion of 1569, followed shortly by the Ridolfi plot. Philip II quickly seized this momentary respite in the west to strike a blow at his enemy in the east.

Even so there were many setbacks before the final alliance was signed on 20 May 1571.[43] The negotiations were so complicated by mutual distrust among the various parties that it seemed unlikely they would ever be concluded. Venice as usual proved difficult: in spite of her official denials she twice tried to come to an understanding with the Turk, and only gave her consent to the league when she was convinced that there was nothing to be hoped for from Constantinople.[44] The conclusion of the treaty, therefore, and its solemn proclamation in St. Peter's on 25 May were a personal triumph of the pope. Its sanction, on the other hand, depended mainly on the power of Spain. For this was not simply a temporary arrangement for Cyprus but a military alliance for three years against Islam itself; and although it was directed in the first instance against the Levant, it did not exclude eventual expeditions against the North African states of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli. By the terms of the agreement, the three allies—Spain, Venice, and the papacy—engaged to assemble by the 1 April each year a force of 200 galleys, 100 sailing ships, 50,000 troops and 4,500 light cavalry, the expenses of which were to be shared in the proportion of three parts by Spain, two by Venice, and one by the papacy. Spain thus bore the greater burden, but her contribution was decisive in more than military supplies. For these vast forces had to be fed, and Venice herself to be sustained while her supply lines from the east were cut. Philip II undertook to open his Italian markets to Venice and to protect her against a price rise by selling at cut rates and without heavy export taxes. This was one of the most vital provisions of the treaty: without Spanish grain supplies the future campaign would have been impossible.

The commander-in-chief of the forces of the league was the Spanish captain-general, Don John of Austria, fresh from his recent victory over Islam in Granada. Sensitive to the condition of his birth and embittered by his inferior status, Don John had long resented an imagined victimisation at the hands of his royal brother. Now, at the age of twenty-four, his passion for action and a supreme command seemed about to be satisfied. Yet in spite of desiring his appointment, Philip II could not overcome a permanent

[43] On the protracted and frustrating negotiations see Serrano, *op. cit.*, i. 85–101, and Pastor, *op. cit.*, xviii. 385–406.

[44] Braudel, *op. cit.*, 924–25. Even after signing the league Venice was ready at least to listen to French offers of mediation with the Turk, *ibid.*, p. 931.

suspicion of his half-brother's youth and judgement. Ever since he had given him his first public office as commander-in-chief of the Spanish navy on the retirement of García de Toledo in 1568, and throughout the war of Granada, he had kept him under the tutelage of the Catalan magnate Luis de Requesens, his former ambassador in Rome and future governor in the Low Countries. Requesens, intelligent and broad-minded, was one of the most distinguished Spanish administrators in the sixteenth century, but he was a thorn in the side of Don John. And so he continued even in 1571. By the terms of his instructions from Philip II, Don John was assigned a large council with powers too absolute for his liking; within this, a smaller council consisting of Requesens, Gian Andrea Doria, the Marquis of Santa Cruz and Juan de Cardona, had the right to guide him in all his actions.[45] Moreover, Requesens was posted permanently to his galley as a kind of censor, and through his hands all orders and correspondence had to pass before they were signed by the younger man. Frustrated by these restrictions, Don John was soon beset by disagreements over strategy among the allied advisers. According to his instructions he was to lead the forces of the league to the Levant as quickly as possible in order to give battle to the enemy on every occasion that offered; but he was not to expose the fleet without near certainty of victory, and he was to return from the Levant at the beginning of autumn. Here different interpretations were possible: Don John's own instinct was for immediate action, but some of his advisers, including Doria, favoured a cautious and defensive policy on the grounds that the season was too late; while the Venetian and papal commanders, furious at the delay, were blaming the Spaniards for it.

Don John left Madrid on 6 June for the assembly point at Messina, collecting on the way the various units of the Spanish contingent and calling at Naples for the papal blessing and the consecrated banner of the league. In spite of allied criticism, he and the Spanish galleys did in fact arrive on time—23 August—and even before the arrival of the full Venetian complement. And their presence immediately raised the morale of the allied forces and gave them some unity. Don John himself made a good impression from the start, and his relations with his immediate subordinates, the commanders of the Venetian and papal fleets, Veneiro and Colonna, were excellent. His drive and personality forged the collection of disparate and squabbling units into a homogeneous whole. Seeing the Venetian galleys short of troops, he had the initiative—and the courage—to make them take 4,000 Spanish and

[45] Instructions of 26 June 1571, Serrano, *op. cit.*, i. 107–8; for additional instructions and an example of conflict between Don John and Requesens see M. Fernández de Navarrete, etc., eds., *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, iii. 187–91, 194.

Italian veterans from Philip II's forces.[46] By distributing his resources in this way he improved the quality of the entire fleet, and made its units more mobile and interchangeable. Finally, he imposed his own decision—to search out the enemy and destroy him.

The Turkish fleet, commanded by Ali Pasha, had been at action stations since the beginning of the season, when almost 200 galleys were distributed between Negrepont, their supply base, and Cyprus. Reinforced with thirty vessels of Euldj Ali of Algiers, it proceeded west, and now it made its first mistake. Unable to resist the temptation of looting in the Adriatic, it dissipated the months from June to August in petty actions which tired its forces and did not even prevent the Venetian fleet from making a break and joining the allies. So the Turks entered battle after a weary summer and past the peak of their form. The lateness of the season thus became an asset to the league and one which Don John was wise to seize. The Christian fleet left Messina on 16 September and made first for Corfu. There it learnt that Famagusta, the last Venetian stronghold in Cyprus, had fallen, and that the Turkish fleet was in the Gulf of Lepanto. Don John decided the time had come to risk all.

The two fleets, searching for each other, suddenly met at sunrise on 7 October 1571 at the entrance to the Gulf of Lepanto, where the Christian fleet managed to contain the enemy.[47] Face to face over some five miles of sea, Christians and Moslems could count at last the other's forces: 230 Turkish galleys confronted 208 Christian, though the latter were equipped with greater firing power and contained the well-armed Spanish infantry.[48] Don John, following contemporary tactics, advanced his six Venetian galleons to form a vanguard of heavy firing power; behind it he divided his galley fleet into four squadrons in line of battle, the left under the Venetian admiral Barbarigo, the right under Doria, and the centre under the commander-in-chief himself, with the fourth squadron under Santa Cruz forming a rearguard. The Turkish galleys were similarly disposed. About noon the wind dropped, and under a burning sun and cloudless sky, with a mutual hoisting of sacred banners, battle was joined. The Turks tried to outflank the enemy at both ends of the line. On the right Doria was outmanoeuvred and lured into extending his line to the extreme wing; he thus left a gap in the centre and was drawn further and further

[46] Serrano, *op. cit.*, i. 114–15.

[47] On the battle of Lepanto see Serrano, *op. cit.*, i. 124–42; the same author's *España en Lepanto* (Madrid, 1935); Anderson, *op. cit.*, 36–46; Sir William Stirling-Maxwell *Don John of Austria* (2 vols., London, 1883), i. 402–27, ii. App. 6; and a series of contemporary accounts in *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, iii. 184–360.

[48] Serrano, *La Liga de Lepanto*, i. 119–20.

away from the main action, to which he contributed little. On the left the Venetians kept their position and stood up to superior forces more successfully, in spite of the loss of their leader Barbarigo. In the centre Don John's galley with its 300 Spanish veterans made straight for the flagship of Ali Pasha and its 400 Janissaries. As other galleys closed and grappled with the enemy, the battle became a series of fierce and bloody struggles between small groups of infantry, and the carnage mounted. The death of Ali Pasha, whose galley the soldiers of Don John and Colonna carried by storm, decided the conflict about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The allied victory was overwhelming. Only thirty-five Turkish galleys escaped; the rest were captured or sunk, with losses of 30,000 killed or wounded and 3,000 prisoners; 117 Turkish galleys and six galiots were shared among the victors. But the victory was dearly bought, for the allies lost twelve galleys, 9,000 dead and 21,000 wounded. It was probably true that the sea suddenly appeared to the combatants to flow red with human blood.

Lepanto was an outstanding feat of technique and courage. The leadership of Don John, the counsel of Requesens, the powerful fire of the Venetian galleons, the excellence of the Spanish infantry, the skilful manoeuvring of the Spanish galleys, all combined to crush the Turk and give joy to Christendom. But what had the battle decided? Because of its own losses and the lateness of the season the allied fleet had to return to Italy. The Ottoman empire, with its powerful military machine and its long tentacles by land, was untouched. Cyprus remained under Turkish rule. The Sultan replaced his losses with astonishing rapidity, so that within a year he had a fleet of 220 vessels at sea again. And the North African pirates were still at large. Nevertheless, Lepanto was not a victory without a result.[49] The spell of Turkish power was broken. Christendom had won at last a moral breakthrough, and freed itself of an old sense of inferiority. Cervantes, who was wounded in the battle, spoke in Don Quixote of 'that day, which was so happy for Christendom, because all the world then learned how mistaken it had been in believing that the Turks were invincible at sea'. Lepanto marked the end of a period, the end of Turkish supremacy. More immediately, the Christian galleys received an immense reinforcement of manpower in the form of prisoners-of-war, while the Turkish fleet was stopped from rampaging with impunity in the central Mediterranean, where Italy itself could have been attacked. This shock to their confidence, among other reasons, made the Turks less ready to commit themselves westwards, and the subsequent disengagement was the worst possible disaster for their fleet—it began to rot in the ports from inactivity.

[49] For a discussion of the consequences of Lepanto see Braudel, *op. cit.*, 922–44.

But these developments were in the future. Fot the moment the allies had their troubles too. National interests, and the mutual distrust to which they gave rise, precluded any possibility of a crusade against Islam. It soon became clear that the allies would only co-operate when their own interests happened to coincide; both Venice and Spain wanted to use the league for their own purposes, Venice in the Levant and Spain in North Africa, and only the pope continued to speak of the interests of Christendom. Under his inspiration another and bigger fleet was assembled at Messina in the spring of 1572 to take further action against the Turk in the Levant. But after the death of Pius V (1 May 1572), Philip II made a complete *volte-face* and ordered Don John to suspend the departure of his galleys.[50] In the ensuing uproar he tried to argue his way out of the charges of treachery hurled at him by his allies. The official reasons he gave for his action were the death of the pope and fear of an imminent rupture with France. But the real reason was his unwillingness to divert the resources of Spain to serve Venetian interests in the eastern Mediterranean. He preferred to strike at Islam where the blow would be most useful to Spain—at Algiers, an enemy outpost, its western base for war and piracy, the point of departure for attacks on Spain and her dependencies. As he explained to his ambassador in Rome, he wanted 'to gain some benefit for my own subjects and states from this league and all its expenses, rather than employ them in so risky an undertaking as a distant expedition in the Levant'.[51] For the pope's benefit his ambassador was to mention his commitments in the Netherlands and his fear of French and English intervention, but not to breathe a word of Algiers.

Yet no one was deceived: the allies saw through his excuses and Spanish concern for Algiers was so well known that his officials dared not mention it. From the entire allied camp, not only from the Venetians and Gregory XIII, but also from Granvelle, Requesens, and Don John, who had taken the cause of the league to heart, came a barrage of protests. He was told that his action would immediately drive Venice to treat with the Turk, and that the new pope had at his disposal the major portion of the Spanish war budget in the Mediterranean, the *excusado* and the *subsidio*.[52] Philip II bowed before the storm and returned to his initial position in the league. He agreed to an expedition to the Morea in 1572, with a reluctance which was soon justified. The operation took the form of a campaign along the wide stretch of coast between the Gulf of Corinth and Cape Matapan on the western side of the Morea, a strange theatre of war with few convenient bases for

[50] Instructions of 17 May 1572, Serrano, *op. cit.*, i. 213–31, 194–95.
[51] Philip II to Juan de Zúñiga, 2 June 1572, *ibid.*, i. 305–09.
[52] *Ibid.*, ii. 7–58; for the Navarino campaign see *ibid.*, ii. 90–150.

the allies.[50] They had counted on a rising of the local population, without, however, doing anything to prepare it; when they arrived there was not even a sign of revolt. They then began another search for the Turkish navy. The latter had been replaced with an immense effort, but it had no intention of risking another Lepanto. Consequently, as the enemy kept aloof and refused combat, the forces of the league had no alternative but to return to Italy, with nothing to show for a costly campaign.

The root of the league's trouble lay in the fact that the distances of the Mediterranean were too vast to allow it to sustain a naval war in the Levant. And out of frustration came dissension. Venice in particular was beginning to feel the strain, as her commerce was crippled and her finances were exhausted. With nothing to show for her efforts—Cyprus was unrecovered—and convinced that she was being exploited by Spain, she opened negotiations with the Turk and abandoned the league on 7 March 1573.[53] The news was received with some bitterness in Spain, but Philip II kept his head and behaved with his usual calmness. Indeed, the defection of Venice was a blessing in disguise. Spain still possessed a powerful fleet which could be usefully employed on more limited, and more national, objectives. Reverting to an African policy, Philip II decided to attack Tunis. It was his last big mistake in the Mediterranean. Don John took Tunis without difficulty on 11 October 1573, appointed a native governor, left a garrison, and returned to Naples. But it was hardly a victory: the operation did not touch the interior of the country and the base itself was difficult and expensive to hold and supply. While the Spaniards were still making up their minds what to do with it, and were torn between the expansive ideas of Don John and the prudence of his king, the Turkish fleet attacked in July 1574. The Spanish garrison capitulated (13 September), while Don John, waiting for instructions from Spain and disillusioned to the point of lethargy, was too late to do anything except return to Spain to consult with his brother.

Only three years after Lepanto the Turks had demonstrated once again the strength of their fleet and the quickness of their striking power, and Philip II had to look once more to his defences in the Mediterranean. Yet Tunis was the last great Turkish victory before decline. It was followed by a period in which both powers were glad to disengage. Distracted by his interests in Persia and finding the Moors of North Africa no longer the enthusiastic collaborators they had been in the past, the Sultan was forced to restrict his ambitions. For his part Philip II had too much on his hands in the Low Countries and too little money in his treasury to take advantage of his enemy's difficulties and continue the offensive. Indeed, the Mediterranean

[53] *Ibid.*, ii. 285–312.

was too big a battlefield, and exceeded the resources of both powers; consequently the withdrawal was mutual and eventually brought a halt to the old conflict. To this extent Philip II's policy of disengagement had more justification than the ambitious policy of Don John. The restraint that he exercised on his brother was not a question of jealousy, suspicion, and excessive caution: unlike Don John, who was obsessed by his own projects, the king could see the whole picture, and he realised that the momentary respite which had made Lepanto possible could not last indefinitely. Philip II was never in a position to strike more than one blow at a time or to give himself and his resources to a single task. He accepted these limitations and his realism was an asset to Spain; he did not lose his head in the wild schemes which were projected after Lepanto, and unlike his father and his brother he was not disturbed by dreams of crusades. Moreover, the policy of peace was the most ruinous one possible for the Turk; for the resultant inaction killed the Turkish navy by ruining its ships and depriving its seamen of experience. What Lepanto had failed to complete, peace achieved in a few years.

Spain already had its spies and its intelligence service penetrating the Ottoman empire, and the Spanish authorities were constantly importuned by suitors of one kind or another—renegades trying to win their way back to grace, former captives posing as specialists in the Levant, Knights of Malta, imperial envoys. After 1573 these informants increased their efforts, hoping for returns from a policy of peace.[54] It was 1577, however, before authentic contact was made, when Martín de Acuña—another adventurer—brought back the first truce from Constantinople. In the following year Giovanni Margliani, a Milanese who had been ransomed after his capture at Tunis in 1574, took over the negotiations and raised them from their picaresque beginnings to a more serious, though still discreet, level. But the Spaniards would never treat with what they called 'those Turkish dogs' in formal diplomacy, for the scandal, loss of face, and possible humiliation were too much to endure. The Turks on the other hand were reluctant to negotiate with anything less than an embassy, but they agreed to a year's truce in 1578, then another in 1580, and finally to one of three years in 1581. This marked a new stage in Spain's external relations with Islam: since the advent of Philip II she had never been crusading, now she was clearly opportunist. After the mission of Margliani a recognised peace was in operation, for the truce of 1581 seems to have been renewed in 1584 and again in 1587. And when hostilities broke out again in the 1590's it was largely a question of bluff and counter-bluff. To interpret the *détente* with

[54] On the truces and their negotiation see Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 984–1008, 1074–84.

the Turk as the end of the religious spirit in Spanish policy is to miss the point of the latter. Political as well as religious interests had infused the foreign policy of Philip II from the earliest years of his reign, as they had that of his predecessors. After 1580 his political—and religious—objectives were turned elsewhere, and the power which had been directed against the Turk now had to confront more dangerous enemies in northern Europe.

Meanwhile, the face of the Mediterranean was changing. From the 1580's the northern maritime countries began to penetrate the Straits of Gibraltar in increasing numbers and to make a challenge for a share of eastern commerce. The periodic shortages of grain suffered by Spain and other Mediterranean countries—particularly acute from 1586 to 1590—gave them their card of entry and opened the area to Dutch and English shipping. But England was interested in more than the grain trade with Christendom. From about 1578, and especially from 1581 when the Levant Company was formed, her agents were negotiating commercial 'capitulations' with the Turk and establishing a trade in Mediterranean and eastern products in exchange for textiles, tin, and lead.[55] Bernardino de Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador in London, was particularly interested in this trade, and in November 1579 he reported his observations to Philip II:

> The Turks are also desirous of friendship with the English on account of the tin which has been sent there for the last few years, and which is of the greatest value to them, as they cannot cast their guns without it, while the English make a tremendous profit on the article, by means of which alone they maintain their trade with the Levant. . . . As this sending tin to the infidel is against the apostolic communion, and your Majesty has ordered that no such voyage shall be allowed to pass the Messina light to the prejudice of God and Christianity, I advise the viceroy of Sicily of the sailing of these ships. . . .[56]

Spain hotly disputed English trade because it was a means of supplying war materials to the national enemy and the enemy of Christendom. But Elizabeth I was not averse from a political understanding with the Turk, especially in 1580, the year of the first English 'capitulation', when the question of the Portuguese succession was imminent and began to threaten the balance of power in the Atlantic. An understanding with the Turk

[55] *Ibid.*, 165–67, 469–502; on English shipping in the Mediterranean and Levant see also Sir Godfrey Fisher, *Barbary Legend. War, Trade and Piracy in North Africa, 1415–1830* (Oxford, 1957), pp. 111–36.

[56] Mendoza to Philip II, 28 November 1579, *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, xci. 439–40.

would be a means of striking at Spain without actually declaring war.[57] In November 1582 Elizabeth signed the commission of her first ambassador to the Sultan, William Harborne, who was to be an assiduous advocate of the English cause, commercial and political. Commercially, the prospects of England were good, owing to the excellence of her ships, the low price of her textiles, and the quality of her organisation, which was perfected by a system of convoys from 1591 as protection against Spanish patrols. But there was a political objective too, and an intelligence service, and this became increasingly active throughout the 1580's when the Spanish Armada was being prepared. Elizabeth sought an alliance with the Turk, using the argument that Protestants and Moslems were alike haters of the 'idolatries' practised by the king of Spain; in particular she wanted the Sultan to send a fleet to attack Spain in the Mediterranean, as a diversionary blow at the impending Spanish offensive on England. Politically, however, England had come to the Mediterranean too late. Elizabeth's approach to the Ottoman empire coincided not with the period of its greatest power and aggression but with that of its retreat and decline, when its reasons for attacking Spain were less urgent and its truces more frequent. For this reason the English overtures were unsuccessful, both before and after the Armada. Politically, the Mediterranean had been neutralised; Spain's battlefield was now the Atlantic.

[57] See E. Pears, 'The Spanish Armada and the Ottoman Porte', *English Historical Review*, viii. (1893), 439–66; H. G. Rawlinson, 'The Embassy of William Harborne to Constantinople, 1583–8', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4th series, v. (1922), pp. 1–27; *C.S.P. Venetian* (London, 1894–97), viii.; Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 489, 1075.

CHAPTER VIII

SPAIN AND THE COUNTER-REFORMATION

1. The Campaign for Uniformity

The liquidation of the war with Islam was a response to mounting pressure from northern Europe. Here, too, religious passions were roused: the rebellion in the Low Countries and the hostility of England were an affront to the Catholic sensibilities of Spaniards as well as a blow to their political and economic interests. Yet Spain, 'the scourge of heretics, the light of Trent, the sword of Rome, the cradle of St. Ignatius', was no more a crusader against Protestantism than she was against Islam.[1] To view her as the champion of the Counter-Reformation is to ignore the secular content of her foreign policy, her adverse relations with the papacy, and her own religious development in the sixteenth century. It is also to distort the character of the Counter-Reformation itself. Spain, as has been seen, had led the way in church reform even before the advent of Luther, and had subsequently embraced the cause of Erasmus with enthusiasm.[2] By the 1540's, however, the Erasmists had been scattered, the Inquisition was increasing its vigilance, and the conciliatory approach to religious problems was becoming more difficult to maintain.

Between 1556, the year of Charles V's retirement to Yuste, and 1563, when the Council of Trent finally ended its deliberations, the climate of religious opinion in Spain underwent yet a further change. The Spanish Inquisition was now in different and harsher hands: Hernando de Valdés, archbishop of Seville and Inquisitor general from 1547 to 1566, reinforced his implacable hatred of heresy with a personal ambition to make himself indispensable to the crown by successful campaigns in defence of orthodoxy. His theological adviser was the Dominican, Melchor Cano, whose profound scholarship and elegance of style made him one of the most distinguished theologians of his time, but whose reaction to heresy was so sensitive that he could hardly distinguish mysticism from Illuminism, and when in doubt was guided by his own relentless formula: 'There are propositions which, without overturning the edifice of the faith, shake it.'[3] The ecclesiastical authorities were now working more closely with the state, and this was

[1] The description is that of Menéndez Pelayo.
[2] See above, pp. 64–73.
[3] Bataillon, *Erasme et l'Espagne*, p. 768.

under the direction of Philip II, who returned to the peninsula from the Low Countries in 1559. Yet the growing tension was caused not by personalities in Spain itself, much less by the policy of Philip II, the so-called champion of the Counter-Reformation. Conditions themselves had changed. The old generation of Spanish humanists had gone. After the peace of Augsburg Charles V had renounced his efforts to arbitrate between Rome and the German Protestants, while in Rome itself the dreams of reconciliation held by humanist reformers had yielded to the firmer—and more realistic—policy of the papacy. For the facts were now against conciliation. Protestantism had advanced to unassailable positions: in Germany and England it was organising itself into national churches, and in France it was growing in power. While attitudes were hardening all over Europe, a new and more intransigent element had entered the situation. Militant Calvinism, efficiently organised and operating from its headquarters in Geneva, was sending out its missionaries and its propaganda. And Calvinism could hardly be approached with an olive branch. The Spanish authorities were soon aware of its existence, not only because of its penetration into the Low Countries but also because its presses were turning out literature for Spain itself. For the first time heterodoxy in the peninsula seemed closely related to international Protestantism, at the very time when the latter was organising its churches; as Spanish dissenters made their way to Geneva, Paris, and the Low Countries, the Inquisition began more searching inquiries into the possible contacts they had left behind.

In these circumstances, Philip II could not renew the initiative taken by his father, even if he had wanted to. The only possible policy seemed to be to strengthen his religious defences. A law of censorship had existed since 1502; by decree of 7 September 1558 this was given more ruthless sanction when the importation of books without royal licence was made a crime punishable by death and confiscation of property.[4] Meanwhile, the list of prohibited books had been growing steadily longer. The University of Louvain prepared the first Index of prohibited books in 1546, and on the basis of this the Spanish Inquisition published its own in 1551–52, to be distinguished from the Roman Index which was first published by Paul IV in 1558 and which was not accepted as binding in Spain. The Index was periodically revised, and extended, so that by 1583 it not only proscribed the works of all known heretics but also included the names of many who had distinguished themselves in the service of the Catholic church, such as Thomas More and John Fisher, Fray Luis de Granada and Juan de Avila, on the grounds that some of their works had been so written that they could

[4] On the Spanish censorship see A. Rumeu de Armas, *Historia de la censura literaria gubernativa en España* (Madrid, 1940).

be misused and misinterpreted. The Prohibitory Index of 1583, prepared by Inquisitor general Quiroga, was followed by an Expurgatory one in 1584, the first of its kind in Spain, giving the expurgations necessary to make acceptable the books enumerated, rather than condemn them outright; here Erasmus outstripped all other entries.[5] According to the rules of the Inquisition all manuscripts and books needed a licence from its secretary before they could be published, and all bookshops and libraries were subject to search. The gradual extension of censorship was accompanied by other measures designed to strengthen the intellectual barriers between Spain and Protestantism. When Philip II decided to return to Spain in July 1559 he was reluctant to leave any of his Spanish subjects behind in the Low Countries exposed to contamination; he therefore notified all Spaniards studying at the University of Louvain to return to Spain within four months and to check with the Inquisition for clearance when they did return.[6] Then, by decree of 22 November 1559, he forbade all Spaniards to study in foreign universities.

In the eyes of the authorities these measures were justified not only by the potential danger of Protestantism in Spain but by its actual existence; religious peace had been shattered by the new religion itself. In the 1550's a group of Lutherans was discovered at Valladolid and another in Seville. It would be inaccurate to describe these as 'Protestant communities', as is sometimes done, for they were hardly organised churches and looked more like conventicles of Illuminists such as had alarmed the Inquisition in 1525. Nevertheless, their doctrines had close affinities with those of Protestantism —justification by faith alone, denial of purgatory and of the value of the sacraments and good works, rejection of confession and of papal authority. And it is conceivable that without the investigations of the Inquisition they might have become authentic Protestant sects, especially as their leaders were not obscure enthusiasts like those of the Illuminists but men of some standing in civil and ecclesiastical society. The inspirer of the Valladolid group was probably Carlos de Seso, a layman who had absorbed some of the new doctrines in his native Italy and brought them with him to Spain about 1550. But its most distinguished member was Dr. Agustín de Cazalla, a canon of Salamanca, who had been appointed court chaplain in 1542 and had spent nine years in Germany and the Low Countries in the emperor's household, afterwards returning to Spain.[7] Cazalla's travels in northern Europe and subsequent contact with Seso were probably less important in

[5] Boyd, *Cardinal Quiroga*, pp. 72–74; see also M. de la Pinta Llorente, 'Historia interna de los índices expurgatorios españoles', *Hispania* xiv. (1954), 411–61.
[6] Bataillon, *op. cit.*, p. 764.
[7] See Menéndez Pelayo, *Heterodoxos*, iii. 395–418; Bataillon, *op. cit.*, pp. 750–54.

his religious development than his own process of thought; in any case he was a celebrated preacher and one not given to hiding his reforming views, and soon he was denounced to the Inquisition for alleged heretical doctrines not only on Justification but also on Purgatory and other matters. With him were compromised his whole family, Fray Domingo de Rojas, member of the Dominican community of San Esteban and son of the Marquis of Poza, Antonio de Herrezuela, a lawyer of Toro, the religious of the monastery of Belen, and a number of aristocratic adherents. By the time the Inquisition began to act the movement had offshoots in Zamora, Palencia, Toro, and Logroño.

When the news from Valladolid became known, Charles V was already in retirement at Yuste and Philip II was in the Low Countries. Charles immediately wrote to the Regent, his daughter Joanna, urging a policy of quick and ruthless repression: 'It must be seen whether they can be prosecuted for sedition and disturbance of the republic, thus incurring the penalty of rebellion without mercy.'[8] Meanwhile, for reasons of his own, Inquisitor general Valdés was equally anxious for a policy of repression, using the ecclesiastical process he commanded. For Valdés felt the insecurity of his own position on two accounts: as archbishop of Seville he was in disgrace for a recent failure to co-operate financially with the crown; as Inquisitor general it was his duty to ensure that situations like that in Valladolid did not arise. To save his own face, a successful heresy hunt, with victims at all costs, was urgently called for. But to effect this the Inquisition needed powers even more absolute than it already possessed, for, as it was then constituted, it lacked jurisdiction over bishops—and Valdés had his eye on a victim more highly placed than any in the Valladolid group—and it was customary to reconcile those who begged for mercy and confessed their errors, which enabled repentant heretics to escape the ultimate penalty. Writing to the papacy in September 1558 he argued that the Spanish Inquisition needed all the support and power it could get, as before his own appointment it had become a run-down machine, crippled by poverty and staffed by judges 'who were not experienced in detecting Lutheran errors'; the recent outbreak occurred among people of importance and it would be dangerous not to make an example of them; for Lutheranism promised relief from church burdens, which might make it welcome to the common people, while the tribunals of the Inquisition might be reluctant to condemn people of quality.[9] On these grounds he requested a papal brief authorising him to go beyond existing ecclesiastical law and to condemn the guilty no matter what the circumstances. His request was successful: papal briefs of

[8] Lea, *History of the Inquisition in Spain*, iii. 434–35.
[9] Valdés to Pius IV, 9 September 1558, in Lea, *op. cit.*, iii. 566–72.

1559 granted the Spanish Inquisition a limited jurisdiction even over bishops and authorised it to condemn penitents even though they begged for mercy, when it was believed that their conversion was not sincere.[10] Armed with these powers, it then struck at the Valladolid group in two sensational *autos de fe* in May and October 1559. At the first Melchor Cano preached for an hour; at the second Philip II himself was present.[11] Cazalla, Rojas, Seso, and twelve others were relaxed to the secular arm and executed; of these only Herrezuela died for his beliefs, and he was burnt alive; the rest had recanted, and so were strangled first then burnt. In calmer times, and before the determination of Valdés to have his victims, these recantations would have been accepted; after his detailed and abject confessions, Cazalla himself expected to escape the death penalty and was shocked to learn that the time of clemency had passed. The minor victims, who escaped with sentences varying from life confinement to light penance, were fortunate indeed.

Meanwhile, another substantial Lutheran group had been discovered in Seville. Its inspirers were Juan Gil—usually known as Dr. Egidio in the Latinised form of his name—and Dr. Constantino Ponce de la Fuente, canons of the Cathedral of Seville.[12] Neither of these were clearly Protestants. Egidio was pursued by the Inquisition from about 1550 but escaped with relatively mild treatment. Constantino had been court chaplain and preacher and as such had accompanied Prince Philip in the Low Countries and Germany during the years 1549 to 1551. Soon after taking up residence as canon of Seville in 1556 he was attacked for both Lutheran doctrines and his Jewish descent. Thrown into prison in 1558, there he died, to be subsequently burnt in effigy as a Lutheran, as was Egidio, after his death. Meanwhile the Seville group had been growing in numbers, with two focal points—the Hieronymite monastery of San Isidro and the house of Juan Ponce de León, a son of the count of Bailén. The Inquisition began to act when it discovered two loads of heretical books conveyed from Geneva by Julian Hernández, whose career as a muleteer was probably a cloak for this kind of operation. Over 800 persons were tried by the Inquisition, many of them women of upper-class families. In two *autos de fe* in 1559 and 1560 over thirty victims were relaxed to the secular arm for the death penalty, including two Englishmen, and as recantations were rarer than at Valladolid, so more died at the stake.

The policy of repression put an end to any chance of organised Lutheranism in Spain, if it ever existed.[13] But Valdés had still to claim his greatest

[10] *Ibid.*, iii. 436.
[11] See Menéndez Pelayo, *op. cit.*, iii. 418–30, 431–39.
[12] *Ibid.*, iv. 75–122; Bataillon, *op. cit.*, 561–79.
[13] The number of 'Protestants' in Spain tried by the Inquisition was not over 400 in all; Schafer; *op. cit.*, ii. 208–32.

victim—the archbishop of Toledo and primate of all Spain. Bartolomé de Carranza was a Dominican friar who for many years had taught theology at Valladolid.[14] Charles V had sent him to the Council of Trent where he stood out determinedly against Protestantism and in favour of improving ecclesiastical discipline. Appointed confessor to Prince Philip in 1550, he accompanied him to England in 1554, and spent three years there, frequently preaching in the Chapel Royal; at first he seems to have advocated moderation in dealing with English Protestants, but afterwards when he himself was accused of Protestantism he naturally wished to avoid any ambiguity and claimed that he had been far more anti-Protestant than the rest of Philip's clerical entourage and to have used his influence to send Cranmer to the stake. In 1557 he was appointed archbishop of Toledo, and almost immediately his enemies accused him to the Inquisition of heresy, citing his famous *Commentaries on the Christian Catechism*. The purpose of the Inquisitor general's application to the papacy for permission to try even bishops was now clear. Valdés had long envied Carranza his successful career, and the elevation of his rival to the see of Toledo, a prize which he himself had hoped for, only increased his hatred. In Melchor Cano, Carranza had another personal enemy; the two had been academic rivals since their student days, and as professors at Valladolid; from Cano he could expect little mercy. Consequently, his arrest on 22 August 1559 was not an impartial act of justice but reflected in some degree motives of personal resentment on the part of his detractors. Unfortunately for Carranza, his theological language was neither incisive nor accurate; although he was by no means a heretic, he was given to exaggerated expressions, which could be misinterpreted if anyone were malicious enough to seek heresy where none were intended.[15] The malice of Valdés and the Spanish Inquisition kept Carranza in jail at Valladolid for over over seven years. During this time the case became a struggle over jurisdiction between Philip II and the Spanish Inquisition on the one hand, and the papacy on the other, while the alleged heresy involved was reduced to almost secondary significance.[16]

In the sixteenth century persecution of dissenters was not exclusive to Spain; it has been aptly remarked that 'Spanish repression is distinguished less for its cruelty than for the power of the bureaucratic, police and judicial machine at its disposal'.[17] Where Spain differed from its neighbours was in

[14] On the Carranza case see Menéndez Pelayo, *op. cit.*, iv. 7–73; G. Marañon, 'El proceso del arzobispo Carranza', *Boletín de la Real Academia de Historia*, cxxxvii. (1950), 135–78.

[15] On the weakness of Carranza's theological language see Beltrán de Heredia, *Historia de la reforma de la Provincia de España, 1450–1550*, p. 182.

[16] For the sequel see below, pp. 276–77. [17] Bataillon, *op. cit.*, p. 530.

possessing an agency which specialised in the pursuit of heresy. But the Spanish Inquisition, like any other institution, must be studied with an awareness of chronology: it did not behave in exactly the same way in every period of its history. Moreover, an institution is comprised of men, who modify old policies or form new ones: Valdés was succeeded by Inquisitors like Espinosa and Quiroga, who had their prejudices but did not see a heretic in every devout priest. The Inquisition had certainly not fired its last shot in the campaign for uniformity, as will be seen, but once the immediate tension of the 1550's had passed, the reign of terror initiated by Valdés did not last long beyond his term of office. At the same time it is useful to remember that the Spanish Inquisition was not a creation of the Counter-Reformation, for it had existed since the previous century, before Protestantism was born. And in unleashing it against heresy at the beginning of his reign Philip II was not acting in collusion with Rome. Relations between Spain and the papacy during the pontificate of Paul IV (1555–59) were worse than they had ever been and precluded any chance of concerted action. Yet in one exceptional case Spain had already co-operated effectively with the papacy to produce a more positive response to Protestantism than mere repression. Spanish representatives had distinguished themselves in the first two assemblies of the Council of Trent and were to do so in the third and most decisive one.

2. The Counter-Reformation in Spain

To define and defend Catholicism by means of a Council was as vital a part of Philip II's policy as it had been of his father's.[18] But conciliar action was in abeyance at the time of his accession. Repudiated by France, the second assembly of the Council of Trent had been scattered in 1552 by the defeat of Charles V and the threat of a Lutheran invasion over the Brenner Pass. Its recall was delayed not only by the international situation but also by the election of a violently anti-Spanish pope in 1555. Paul IV was preoccupied with other interests than a Council, among them the expulsion from Italy of 'that breed of Moors and Jews, those dregs of the earth', as he described his Spanish enemies. His hostility revived the Franco-papal alliance and resulted in war with Spain. It was not until 1559, when a new pope was elected and France and Spain came to terms in the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis, that the work of reform begun in the earlier sessions of the Council of Trent could be resumed. But now there was a new complication, for the question was debated whether the Council of Trent should

[18] See above, pp. 81–82, 90–96, 98–104.

be continued or whether a fresh start should be made.[19] In Germany a religious settlement had been already reached by the Peace of Augsburg, and the new Emperor, Ferdinand I, feared that this would be upset by the revival of the Council of Trent; he wanted a new Council favourable to radical changes in the discipline of the Church and conciliatory towards Protestants. The French government, preoccupied with the progress of Calvinism among its own subjects, also demanded a new Council, to be held in France, to include Protestant representatives, and to be ready to discuss Protestant doctrine. Pius V was rescued from these difficulties largely by the support of Spain. A junta of Spanish theologians called by Philip II came out unmistakably on the side of continuing the old Council, partly in order to preserve its condemnation of the Lutheran doctrine of Justification, and this decision was seconded by the king himself. Support of the powerful Spanish interest thus enabled the pope to recall the Council of Trent, which held its final assembly from 1562 to 1563, almost fifty years after the appearance of Luther's Wittenberg theses.

To attribute to Spain the success of the Council of Trent—'as Spanish as it was ecumenical'—hardly does justice to the leadership of the papacy and the contribution of the Italian and French delegations.[20] But Spain undoubtedly played a major rôle, not only numerically—there were 130 Spaniards in the final assembly—but also in the quality of her representatives.[21] These included Cardinal Pacheco, bishop of Jaén; the Dominican theologians, Melchor Cano and Domingo de Soto; the eminent canonist, Diego de Covarrubias; and an able group of Jesuits. The papacy itself showed a predilection for Spaniards. Of the fourteen theologians whom the pope sent to the Council during the three assemblies as his own delegates, eleven were Spaniards, a choice which reflected their learning as well as their impeccable orthodoxy. Among the special theologians of the Holy See were the Spanish Jesuits Laínez and Salmerón, who, together with the Frenchman Favre, had been recommended by Loyola himself. Laínez was probably the most influential theologian at Trent, and his views on Justification were included in the official Acts of the Council.[22] The Spanish party at Trent, of course, were just as sensitive to the interests of their own country and the directions of their own ruler as any other delegation there. But the Spanish king, unlike the king of France, was not embarrassed by

[19] See H. Jedin, *Ecumenical Councils of the Catholic Church* (Eng. trans., London, 1960), pp. 142–86.

[20] The description is that of Menéndez Pelayo, *op. cit.*, iv. 406.

[21] C. Gutiérrez, *Españoles en Trento* (Valladolid, 1951), pp. 1038–43; see also R. Burgos, *España en Trento* (Madrid, 1941).

[22] See F. Cereceda, *Diego Laínez en la Europa religiosa de su tiempo, 1512–1565* (2 vols., Madrid, 1945–46).

Protestant subjects, and consequently he was never tempted to urge concessions to Protestant opinion. For this reason, as well as because of its own orthodoxy, the Spanish party supported the adoption of a specifically Catholic position by the Council of Trent, and the principles of doctrine and discipline which this entailed. The condemnation of the Lutheran view of Original Sin and Justification, the definition of Catholic doctrine, the adherence to the tradition of the church as well as the Bible as the basis of authority, the acceptance of the Latin Vulgate text as the official version of Scripture, the special position granted to Thomist philosophy, the insistence on clerical celibacy, the reform of the clergy and the provision for their better education, the strengthening of episcopal power—all these measures, embodied in the most vital decrees of the Council, were supported and promoted by the Spanish theologians.

Yet Spanish opinion did not coincide entirely with the views of the papacy; on two issues—episcopal jurisdiction and the prerogatives of the crown—it expressed a national point of view. The final assembly of the Council was almost wrecked by the disputes over the derivation of episcopal jurisdiction. The question of whether bishops exercised authority as delegates of the pope or received it directly from God affected the interests both of the papacy and of the national episcopates. If bishops had an independent power, what became of papal supremacy? And did not the Spanish crown regard its bishops as a national rather than a papal body? Without drawing extreme inferences, or questioning papal authority, the Spanish bishops at Trent defended the divine right of episcopacy; in this they followed the Spanish tradition of limiting the scope of papal intervention in Spain, and also emphasised their old conviction that ecclesiastical reform was more likely to be promoted by native bishops than by the policy or the agents of the Roman Curia. But episcopalism was defeated at a theoretical level, for the decision of Trent strengthened the hands of the bishops by giving them extensive powers of visitation and of summoning diocesan synods, but as delegates of the papacy, which remained the head of the hierarchy and the supreme court of appeal. In practice, however, the Spanish bishops had a powerful advocate in their own king, who was extremely sensitive about his rights of patronage. Philip II had his own reservations about some of the decisions of the Council. He suspected those decrees which seemed to threaten the supremacy of the crown over the Spanish clergy, including the provision that 'the appropriate provincial synod and in the final instance the pope should examine the character and orthodoxy of all new prelates'.[23] This reform was not acceptable to Philip, because it would give the pope some influence in ecclesiastical appointments. On the question

[23] Pastor, *History of the Popes*, xv. 358; xvi. 364–66.

of the Spanish Inquisition the king was equally adamant: there should be no diminution of its jurisdiction, as some bishops at Trent would have liked.[24] He instructed his ambassadors, Diego de Vargas in Rome and the Count of Luna at Trent, to make sure that the pope and the council did not interfere in any way with the Spanish Inquisition, or with anything that touched his authority. He believed he had the right to direct the Roman Curia and the Council, and when Pius IV protested, the Spanish ambassador expressed surprise and reprimanded him.[25] Therefore, after Pius IV had ratified the decrees of Trent by a papal bull of 26 January 1564, Philip II spent many months vacillating between publishing and not publishing them. Eventually he decided in favour of publication, but only with the proviso that they did not encroach on the rights and privileges of the Spanish crown, especially in appointments to benefices. This virtually invalidated those canons of the Council which would reduce the influence of the Spanish king in ecclesiastical jurisdiction and in the provision of bishops in his dominions.[26]

The reluctance of Philip II to publish the decrees of Trent illustrates one of the basic weaknesses of the Council. It was not an executive body: it could lay down principles but it could not apply them. The papacy was the only executive body it contained, but the papacy's power of intervention was limited even in Catholic countries, and it depended on the co-operation of secular rulers. Philip II was sincere in his desire for ecclesiastical reform; he devoted an immense amount of his time to church affairs, and it is clear from his correspondence that in filling episcopal sees his concern for religious standards survived the most intense obsession with the political and financial details of each appointment. But he insisted that reform should develop under his authority and take account of Spanish conditions. For this reason, while he supported the holding of provincial councils to implement the Tridentine decrees, he also insisted on the attendance of his own deputies. In November 1565 Pius IV objected to the presence of laymen in ecclesiastical councils, which he regarded as a usurpation of papal jurisdiction and a cause of the scandalous saying that he was not pope in Spain.[27] Remembering the aspirations of the Spanish episcopate at Trent he believed that the independence it had failed to secure in the Council was now being promoted indirectly in Spain itself. He was also critical of Spanish bishops for opposing appeals of litigants to Rome, which he

[24] M. Philippson, 'Felipe II y el Pontificado', *Estudios sobre Felipe II*, ed. R. de Hinojosa (Madrid, 1887), pp. 121–22.
[25] V. de Lafuente, *Historia eclesidstica de España* (Madrid, 1879), vii. 80.
[26] Pastor, *op. cit.*, xvi. 106–07.
[27] L. Serrano, ed., *Correspondencia diplomdtica entre España y la Santa Sede durante el Pontificado de S. Pio V* (Madrid, 1914), i. 30–32.

regarded as another infringement of the conciliar decrees.[28] But these complaints had little effect in Spain: in 1582 the papacy was still objecting to Philip II's sending royal delegates to the synod of Toledo, and the objections were still in vain.[29]

The work of reform advocated by the Council of Trent, therefore, was promoted in Spain under the control of the crown and its ecclesiastical advisers, and developed at the pace set by them. It was a cautious process, its intellectual standards were marked by scholarship rather than speculation, and it owed more to the private enterprise of reformers like St. Teresa than to official initiative. In its formative years its character was established by Gaspar de Quiroga, whose rule was that of an ecclesiastical statesman rather than of a pioneer in the mould of Ximénez. The appointment of Quiroga, in fact, was characteristic of the religious policy of Philip II. A canon-lawyer by training at Salamanca and Valladolid, canon of Toledo under Archbishop Tavera and Auditor of the Roman Rota from 1554 to 1556, he soon brought himself to the notice of the crown by his uncompromising support for the royal prerogative in ecclesiastical affairs and by his ability to deal with the papacy. It was his regalism, as well as his integrity and judgement, which earned him preferment. In 1558 Philip II employed him as inspector of monasteries in Naples and Sicily, a post which he held concurrently with membership of the Council of Castile; the success of his mission in Italy led to his appointment to the presidency of the Council of Italy in 1567 and to the bishopric of Cuenca in 1572. Quiroga's career, which was typical of the Spanish tradition of combining civil and ecclesiastical office, each bolstering the other, was crowned by his appointment as Inquisitor general in 1573, archbishop of Toledo and primate of Spain in 1577, and cardinal in 1578. The instruments of religious reform and security were now in his hands.

At Cuenca Quiroga introduced the religious policies which he was to employ on a larger scale when he became archbishop of Toledo. He was a resident bishop, who set an example by his own frugal living and was conscious of his pastoral mission. His religious programme was subsidised from the revenue of his see, and included church reform by diocesan synod, the promotion of education and social services, and patronage of the arts in the service of religion; to implement his plans he developed a close working agreement with two orders, Augustinians and Jesuits, which were the agencies through which he employed his funds for welfare and education.[30] At Toledo he had even greater scope for action, and from here he virtually directed the work of the Counter-Reformation in Spain. He

[28] *Ibid.*, i. 37–38.
[29] Boyd, *op. cit.*, p. 30; Pastor, *op. cit.*, xix. 364.
[30] Boyd, *op. cit.*, pp. 20–22.

began with a reforming operation in his own archdiocese, urging the clergy to improve their standards of piety and worship, insisting on stricter control of religious processions, and once again making provision for the extension of Christian education.[31] Negatively an important theme of his reforms was to prevent the indiscriminate mingling of the sacred and the profane, by excluding secular celebrations and bullfights from religious occasions and limiting the number of *fiestas*. More positively he organised the preparation, discussion, and publication in 1581 of a new *Manual of the Sacraments*, in order to regulate the administration of the sacraments in Spain. To extend his programme and impose it at the highest level he called a special synod in Toledo in 1582, which bishops from various dioceses attended; many of the topics on the agenda were abandoned because of the usual lack of agreement among the representatives of different districts and orders, but an agreed plan of reform was eventually adopted, in general conformity with the decrees of Trent. Seminaries for the training of priests were projected; rules for the celebration of Mass, clerical dress, and the minimum qualifications in candidates for ordination were agreed upon; a campaign to enforce clerics to reside in their benefices was decided, and provisions were made to exercise jurisdiction over those who failed to perform their priestly duties. Quiroga spent the rest of his life administering this programme, guided by the twin principles of uniformity and centralisation; and by the time of his death in 1594 he was also known as a munificent patron of the arts for the glory of religion; it was no coincidence that El Greco lived and worked in Toledo, the headquarters of the second wealthiest see in Christendom and the home of his most distinguished ecclesiastical patron. Nevertheless, the action of Quiroga was strangely deficient in what is usually regarded as one of the most characteristic reforms of the Counter-Reformation. In accordance with a decree of Trent and with one of the decisions of the Council of Toledo concerning the foundation of seminaries, Quiroga formed a commission to consider the possibility of erecting a seminary in Toledo. After many meetings the commission reported unfavourably, and in spite of the promptings of Gregory XIII Quiroga agreed with the commission, on the grounds that while it was desirous to carry out the decrees of Trent other factors such as crop failures and poor economic conditions made it impossible for benefice holders to increase their contributions beyond their regular commitments. Thus, twenty years after the conclusion of Trent, the primate of Spain and the holder of one of the wealthiest sees in the church, who gave generously to the state and to patronage of the arts, pleaded penury for failure to establish a seminary.[32]

[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 27–32.

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

Intellectually Quiroga lacked vision rather than good will, and he was incurably cautious. Indeed it was his duty to be cautious, for he was also Inquisitor general. The old question of papal jurisdiction over the Spanish Inquisition had already been resolved in favour of the crown before the régime of Quiroga. He himself never questioned papal supremacy in spiritual matters, and as he saw it the Inquisition came under the pope's delegated power; but he did as much as he could to diminish this power in practice and to preserve the *de facto* independence of the Spanish tribunal. He also extended the jurisdiction of the Inquisition as an instrument of civil administration in the service of the state, often at the expense of royal officials. As the power of the latter could be limited by local laws and immunities, Philip II approved the extension of Inquisition authority in every case; but while this gave his administration an efficient agency, it also made the Inquisition more liable to abuse as an instrument of political repression.[33] Yet here its touch was light indeed compared to its ponderous approach to intellectual developments.

3. Scholarship and Regalism

A characteristic feature of the renaissance in Spain had been a revival of biblical and theological studies. Yet the Spanish church of the Counter-Reformation proved incapable of assimilating creative speculation in these fields and could only tolerate a barren and lengthy repetition of old knowledge, with the result that original thought was sacrificed to security and the Counter-Reformation lost one of its most promising assets. For the intellectual controversies in Castile in the second half of the sixteenth century were not a question of orthodoxy versus dissent, but represented rather two ways of approaching theological studies. On the one hand a group of conservative scholastics endlessly repeated the doctrines and the methods of the medieval schoolmen, and often spoke as though it were heresy to dispute the views of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. Another group, the true heirs of the Spanish renaissance, endeavoured to assimilate the new acquisitions of sixteenth-century science and scholarship, and apply them to sacred studies; in the works of scholars like Fray Luis de León and Alonso Gudiel an attempt was made to integrate the best of scholasticism with more recent knowledge and so to effect a restoration of the biblical sciences. Yet these men, orthodox though they were, aroused suspicion almost before they opened their mouths. As the distinguished exegete, Diego de Zúñiga, remarked in 1584, any interpretation of the Bible that differed from the currently accepted one was regarded as Jewish subversion:

[33] See above, pp. 215–17.

'The stupid clamour of those people (the reactionaries) has produced such a panic in many learned exegetes that they have ended up by retiring from their noble and holy task, because they believe that it is impossible for a person of culture to devote himself safely to the study of sacred letters.'[34] The tension was aggravated by the conditions of academic life in Spain. In the 1570's the various religious orders were divided uncompromisingly into rival camps and competed ruthlessly for university and ecclesiastical vacancies. Appointments to university chairs, which were decided by vote of students, were the occasion of intense campaigning by rival orders on behalf of their candidates. The conflict between the Dominicans and the Jesuits was fought with no holds barred, but perhaps the bitterest rivalry of all was that between the Dominicans and the Augustinians, and this coincided to some extent with the dispute between the old learning and the new.

The opening rounds were fired by a group of conservative scholastics led by the malevolent León de Castro, a theologian of Salamanca, who denounced a number of distinguished Augustinian scholars to the Valladolid Inquisition.[35] Among others, Luis de León, Professor of Theology at Salamanca, and Alonso Gudiel, Professor of Scripture at the University of Osuna, were arrested in March 1572. Behind the personal animosity of the accusers for the accused lay the more fundamental issue of scriptural exegesis. Gudiel was accused of giving a literal meaning to the texts on the subject of Christ which precluded any prophetic and allegorical meanings. His defence was that a literal historical interpretation was not incompatible with a prophetic one, since it was derived from the acts and words of Christ, and was thus perfectly orthodox. But in June 1572 the Inquisition's theological consultant, Hernando del Castillo, condemned as heretical the doctrine attributed to Gudiel concerning the literal meaning of various texts.[36] Before the case was settled, Gudiel died in prison in April 1573, and the Valladolid tribunal notified the various Augustinian houses that he was in error and died outside the faith. Over ten years later, Inquisitor general Quiroga, unsatisfied with the case, reopened it, and this time Castillo cleared Gudiel of heresy, saying that statements of St. Thomas were open to discussion and could be questioned without committing heresy, though extreme caution should be observed. The implications of Castillo's own *volte-face* were not considered.

In the trial of Luis de León the issues involved were more diverse. Poet

[34] Quoted in M. de la Pinta Llorente, *Causa criminal contra el biblista Alonso Gudiel* (Madrid, 1942), p. 27.

[35] For a useful summary of these cases, see Boyd, *op. cit.*, pp. 65–74.

[36] On the case of Gudiel see Pinta Llorente, *Causa criminal contra el biblista Alonso Gudiel*, passim.

as well as theologian, he was brought to account for his translation of the *Song of Songs* into Spanish, for his alleged deprecation of the Latin Vulgate text of the Bible, and for his views on predestination and grace.[37] But in his case, too, the most heated controversies developed over the interpretation of the Vulgate edition approved by the Council of Trent. Luis de León drew a scholar's distinction between the Vulgate as written by St. Jerome and the various printed texts of this version, which often differed from one another in detail. However, he preferred the Hebrew original above all. The case against him was not strong, especially as some of the evidence came from Dominicans, against whose competition he had won his Chair at Salamanca in 1561, and from Fray Gabriel Montoya, prior of the Augustinian monastery at Toledo, who bore him a personal grudge. But meanwhile the interminable processes of the Inquisition deprived him of his Chair and kept him in prison for year after year. In spite of promptings from Inquisitor general Quiroga to hasten with the case, the Valladolid tribunal allowed its machinery to grind on regardless of human considerations. Eventually Quiroga himself intervened. Making a distinction between a dogmatic and an undefined proposition, he acknowledged that the latter was susceptible to rational argument for or against. And he ordered his deputies at Valladolid to acquit Luis de León with a warning to be more careful in future, and to withdraw from circulation the manuscript copy of his Spanish version of the *Song of Songs*. By this time, however, Luis de León had been in the jails of the Inquisition for over five years. On returning to his Chair at Salamanca he is reported to have begun his first lecture with the words, 'As I was saying last time . . .'. If the anecdote is true, it was an expression of bitterness not of resignation.

The Inquisition, however, had not yet finished with the intellectuals: within a few years it turned its attention to Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas, 'el Brocense', a humanist scholar who specialised in philology but was also interested in cosmography and astronomy and often discussed the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems of the universe. Copernicus was not proscribed by the Spanish Inquisition, but Aristotle was another matter. When Sánchez questioned Aristotle's definition of logic, declaring that it was based on ignorance, Fray Mancio of Corpus Christi College, Salamanca, challenged him on the grounds that the doctrines of St. Thomas Aquinas were founded on Aristotle, and the Catholic faith on St. Thomas. To this Sánchez replied that he considered Mancio's statement to be heresy; moreover, if it could be shown that his faith was founded on St. Thomas then he would look for another faith. As a result of this statement, the Valladolid tribunal

[37] A. F. Bell, *Luis de León. A study of the Spanish Renaissance* (Oxford, 1926), pp. 101–61.

began to move against 'el Brocense' in January 1584. He defended himself with vigour, arguing that he did not question what had been decreed by the church, but merely considered that in matters of history and philosophy, sacred and profane, some theologians were most ignorant and needed instruction. His defence was foolproof, and the Inquisition could do no more than reprimand and release him.[38]

Together with the proceedings against the biblicists Martín Martínez de Cantalapiedra and Gaspar de Grajal, these were the only important cases in which the Inquisition prosecuted scholars, and even here, with the intervention of Quiroga, a rough though belated justice was eventually done; and such cases were a reflection not only on the Inquisition but also on conditions in Spanish universities, where rival groups of scholars vented their envy and competed for power by denouncing others to the dreaded tribunal. This had a pernicious effect on scholarship and creative work in Spain and affected the climate of opinion in which they could flourish. Moreover, the fear among writers engendered by the Inquisition cannot be measured in terms of the number of prosecutions: its hostile gaze circumscribed intellectual activity and encouraged the adoption of conventional and conformist attitudes, even outside of faith and morals. Contemporaries were not unaware of the damage that was being done, and some of them were sensitive to the larger implications of this deterrent to speculation. Juan de Mariana, the distinguished Jesuit theologian and political philosopher, who had himself on occasion worked for the Inquisition in an advisory capacity, was highly critical of the tribunal's methods of investigation and voiced his disquiet at their effect on scholarship in Spain. Commenting on the experience of Fray Luis de León, he wrote:

> The case made many people anxious, as they awaited its result. For men of learning and reputation were forced to defend themselves while in prison against something that was quite dangerous to their lives and good name. What a miserable situation is that of the virtuous man! As reward for his achievements he has to endure the hatred and accusations of the very people who should be his defenders. With such an example, the ambitions of many gifted men were bound to decline and their energies to weaken and perish. The case in question disheartened many, as they saw the danger to others and the torment which threatened those who freely stated what they thought. In this way many changed over to the other side or decided to bow before the storm. Indeed, what could be done? Is it not madness to exert oneself in vain and to exhaust oneself only to achieve hatred? Those who shared the popular opinions went on doing so with greater gratification and they encouraged ideas that were acceptable, ideas in which there was less danger but no greater concern for truth.[39]

[38] See A. F. Bell, *Francisco Sánchez El Brocense* (Oxford, 1925); A. Tovar and M. de la Pinta Llorente, *Procesos inquisitoriales contra Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas* (Madrid, 1941).

Mariana was one of those who remained true to his convictions; thirty years after the case of Luis de León the hand of the Inquisition descended on him too.

Hostile to speculation, the ecclesiastical authorities looked with more indulgence on those whose interests lay in reform and in reviving and extending religious belief and practice. The greatest impetus to religious revival, however, came not from the hierarchy but from the private endeavours of individual reformers. In the first half of the sixteenth century the most outstanding figure in the reform movement was St. Peter of Alcántara (1499–1562), who, having studied at Salamanca, joined the recently instituted Discalced Franciscan Reform and lived a life of extreme austerity. It was he who provided a link with later reformers. He first met St. Teresa at Avila in 1558; besides counselling her in spiritual matters, he took an interest in her initial foundation in 1562 and was instrumental in obtaining the sanction of the bishop of Avila for it. St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross, authors of masterpieces of Christian mysticism, were also founders of the Discalced Carmelite Reform, and between 1562 and 1576 founded numerous reformed convents and monasteries.[40] The obstacles of inertia, vested interests, and outright resistance which beset their programme were immense; St. John of the Cross was kidnapped by unreformed Carmelites in 1577 and kept for eight months in solitary confinement in Toledo, during which time he was periodically flogged by his enemies. But the Discalced Carmelite Reform triumphed in the years 1579–82 when its promoters managed to enlist some support from church and state. St. Teresa, who was grateful to Quiroga for his approval of her *Life*, also found him 'very favourable to the Discalced', though occasionally she felt frustrated by his intransigence over details. Philip II himself was interested

[39] *Pro Editione Vulgata* (1609) in J.-P. Migne, ed., *Scripturae sacrae cursus completus* (Paris, 1839), i. 589. Mariana's essay was a modified version of his report on the Polyglot Bible of Arias Montano made for the Inquisition twenty-five years previously; it was published in 1609 in Cologne as part of a collection of smaller works under the title *Tractatus VII*, and is printed in Migne, *op. cit.*, i. 587–698. One of these works dealt with the debasement of the Spanish currency, and it was largely for this reason that Mariana was arrested by the Inquisition and charged with lèse-majesté for having criticised the fiscal policies of the king before a foreign audience. He was released after one year but the treatise on currency was placed on the Spanish Index and the *Pro Editione Vulgata* was expurgated.

[40] See E. Allison Peers, *Handbook to the life and times of St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross* (London, 1954).

Foundation of Convent of Pastrana by St Teresa of Jesus

in the movement and did something to further its progress, especially during the critical years of the conflict with the Observance between 1576 and 1580; St. Teresa often wrote to him on its behalf, and although she considered his support did not go far enough, it was with royal assistance that a separate province for the Discalced was authorised by Gregory XIII in 1580, a vital stage in the process of reform.

Much of the caution of the Spanish authorities in religious affairs stemmed from an unwillingness to provide any occasion for papal intervention and a hostility to foreign influences, and was a reflection of a religious nationalism which, while it never reached the positions adopted by Protestant states, fell far short of the ideals of the papacy. Philip II and the Spanish Inquisition were always anxious to reduce Italian influence in the Spanish church; for the Italian clergy were suspect in Spain, and Philip II, confident of his own orthodoxy, described them as 'prone to licentiousness and liberty', and compared their 'dissolute' ways unfavourably with the 'holy principles of the Spanish religious'. Similar sentiments can be seen in the instructions given to the Spanish ambassador in Rome in 1562, when he was ordered to ask the pope to concede the segregation of the Franciscans of Sardinia from their Italian obedience and their incorporation in the province of Aragon. In the same year the Spanish king also requested that the Cistercians of Aragon be freed from French religious jurisdiction, because, as he explained to the pope, 'heresies have penetrated France and are increasing there, and it would be most dangerous and harmful to our Christian religion, which, praise God, is preserved in my kingdoms, to suffer such coming and going between Spain and France, where the Cistercian Order has its government'.[41] But the bitterest conflict of all raged around and within the Society of Jesus; it was the new order of St. Ignatius, Spanish in its origins, international in its development, that was the greatest challenge to national susceptibilities.

By the middle of the sixteenth century the Society of Jesus had come to play a leading rôle in the Counter-Reformation. Led by a general with virtually unlimited power and animated by a spirit of utter obedience, the Jesuits occupied advance positions in the struggle against heresy and in the promotion of the Catholic faith. Yet the order did not originate simply as a reaction to Protestantism.[42] In the years of his apprenticeship in religion Protestantism did not preoccupy Ignatius Loyola; in his first organised

[41] Quoted in Reglà, *Felip II i Catalunya*, p. 175.

[42] On the origin of the Jesuits see J. Brodrick, S.J., *The Origin of the Jesuits* (London, 1948); P. Casanovas, *San Ignacio de Loyola, fundador de la Compañía de Jesus* (Barcelona, 1954); P. Leturia, *Estudios Ignacianos* (Rome, 1957); on the Society in Spain see A. Astraín, *Historia de la Compañía de Jesus en la Asistencia de España* (7 vols., Madrid, 1902–25).

enterprise he and his companions tried to reach the Near East, not Germany, and when this attempt failed he offered himself and his followers to the pope, willing to do whatever work the pope appointed them to; and they were appointed in fact not to countries where Protestantism was spreading but to Italian towns and villages, which always remained in name at least Catholic. Of his first companions only one worked directly among the Reformers, and he was sent at the pope's express request, and for a limited time. It was not until the mission of Canisius that the Jesuit Counter-Reformation began in earnest, and that was a decade after the death of Ignatius. The first Jesuits for the most part confined themselves to Catholic countries, and when Ignatius sent the greatest of them, St. Francis Xavier, to do missionary work he sent him not to central Europe but to the Far East. In its most primitive form, therefore, the Jesuit order was intended exclusively for men bound by solemn vow to go at a 'moment's notice wherever the pope might direct them. This precluded what later became one of the most characteristic features of the society and one of its most important contributions to the Counter-Reformation, namely its educational system, which involved regular work in a fixed place of residence. And it was only gradually that Ignatius accepted the idea of providing schools for Catholic youth. And this was a Spanish idea. One of the aristocratic recruits of the society, Francis Borgia, Duke of Gandia and Viceroy of Catalonia in 1541, founded the little University of Gandia in 1547; although the foundation had little significance from a cultural point of view, it first directed the activities of the order into educational channels, and for the first time provided education for lay pupils side by side with its own members. In 1550 Borgia gave Ignatius money to found a college in Rome, and it was from this that the Gregorian University grew. But the founder of the order was still unwilling to provide education for others than his own members. Then, under pressure of the Spanish viceroy in Sicily, the Spanish ambassador in Rome, and the pope himself, he authorised the opening of a mixed college at Messina for the education of Jesuits and non-Jesuits, and it was from this experiment that Jesuit education, with its mixture of scholasticism and humanism, sprang and developed.[43]

While the society was widening its objectives, it was also developing its organisation. In its original form there were few signs of that autocracy and militarism with which it was later credited. When Ignatius gathered together his first six companions in Paris, there was no paternalism and he was not in command; his vote in their consultations was no weightier than theirs. And in debating the organisation of the movement in Rome in

[43] On Jesuit education in Spain see J. S. Diaz, *Historia del Colegio Imperial de Madrid* (Madrid, 1952).

1539, when they decided to take a vow of obedience to one of their own number, the discussion was conducted and votes were taken with scrupulous regard for free speech. The constitution of the order cost Ignatius years of study and writing; he then submitted it in 1551 to those of the Fathers whom he could summon to Rome, revised it in accordance with their suggestions, and sent it to be tested experimentally for a long period in Spain, Portugal, and other countries. And it was two years after he died before it became the actual law of the society.[44] This gave the order its distinctive organisation, the most novel features of which were its intimate dependence on the papacy, to which its members took a special vow of obedience and offered themselves for the propagation of the faith, and concentration of power in a central executive—a general in Rome—which contrasted with the more federal constitutions of the older religious orders. The general was elected for life by the General Congregation of the order, which was made up of provincials and two other representatives.

The centralisation of power and policy, with the centre outside of Spain, together with the society's special relation with the papacy was an affront to the absolutist susceptibilities of the Spanish crown and to the spirit of Spanish nationalism. Ideally the society was a supra-national body. Although it was Spanish in origin, it quickly recruited members from all nations, and its internationalism is usually seen as one of the strongest forces by means of which the papacy fought the idea of religious nationalism. It is true that the Jesuits drew much of their effectiveness from the fact that they were an international order. But early in its history national rivalries appeared within it, and it was to counter the nationalist sentiments of the Portuguese province that Ignatius wrote his famous letter on obedience. In some ways the activities of the order itself lent themselves to this tendency. For the Jesuits were anxious to win for their spiritual mission the support of powerful people, and in an age of *cuius regio eius religio* they were not averse from gaining influence over kings and princes; while their own training and ability, and the fact that many of their members were recruited from the aristocratic classes, enabled them to win some successes in this direction. From this it was not a big step to their allowing themselves to be used to perform political services, often against the true spirit of the order. This, too, tended to foster national antagonisms within the society, especially if the Jesuits in a particular country were prepared to follow the policy of their sovereign rather than of their spiritual head. This is precisely what happened in Spain, where a group of Spanish Jesuits, for nationalist reasons and with the support of Philip II, violently opposed the centralisation of the order's executive.

[44] Brodrick, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

As long as Spaniards monopolised control of the order, opposition was dormant. For the society was Spanish not only in its origin but also in its personnel. Four of the first six followers of Ignatius were Spaniards; of the twenty-five members of the first General Congregation in 1558 eighteen were Spaniards; the first three generals of the society were all Spaniards. In 1573, however, a Belgian was elected general, followed in 1581 by a second non-Spaniard, the Neapolitan, Claudio Aquaviva. A group of Spanish malcontents now organised a movement within the society to reduce the authority of the general in Rome and to make the four provinces of the society in Spain more independent of his control.[45] The position they adopted appealed to Philip II, for it promised to give him the opportunity to control the Jesuits and diminish their dependence on the papacy. After various minor conflicts between the Spanish Inquisition and the society, the real trial of strength came in 1587 when Philip II ordered his ambassador in Rome to secure papal approval for an inquisitor or bishop to inspect all the religious orders in Spain. Under cloak of a general permit, the visitation of the Jesuits was begun by the Bishop of Cartagena in 1588, when he was ordered to discover, among other things, why the superiors were not chosen by vote, why the governor of the order was dependent on Rome, and what was the purpose of the peculiar nature of their vows. The inquiry, in fact, was directed not at reform of the order but at the very nature of its constitution. In the first house visited the Jesuits did all in their power to hinder the visitation, and in September 1588 Aquaviva persuaded the pope to suspend the inspection. Philip II replied by replacing the episcopal inspector by a compliant Jesuit one, José de Acosta, a distinguished missionary recently returned from the Indies, and through him working for the summons of a General Congregation which would change the constitution of the society. A Congregation did, in fact, meet in 1593, but thanks to a desperate campaign waged by Aquaviva, the functions of the central executive and the unity of the Jesuit system remained unrestricted. In his struggle to get these principles acknowledged, Aquaviva preserved one of the essential characteristics of the order, while Philip II failed in his attempt to nationalise it and bring it under Inquisition control. The entire episode was yet another example of the Spanish crown's anxiety to acquire greater control over the institutions subordinated to papal jurisdiction which were operating in Spain, and was part of the more general problem of Philip II's relations with the papacy.

[45] See Astraín, *op. cit.*, iii; Boyd, *op. cit.*, pp. 82–87; M. de la Pinta Llorente, *Actividades diplomáticas del P. José de Acosta* (Madrid, 1952).

4. Philip II and the Papacy

The view that Philip II was the secular arm of the Counter-Reformation is based on the assumption that his own claims must be taken at their face value, and on the fallacy that because the religious motive was sometimes present in Spanish policy, therefore it was always present and was the most important motive.[46] The popes he had to deal with took a different view. They considered that Philip II, like his predecessors, used his prestige as a Catholic sovereign to pursue objectives that were essentially political. A characteristic summary of the papal view of Philip II's foreign policy was given in 1589 with reference to his ambitions in France: 'The King of Spain, as a temporal sovereign, is anxious above all to safeguard and to increase his dominions. . . . The preservation of the Catholic religion which is the principal aim of the Pope is only a pretext for His Majesty whose principal aim is the security and aggrandisement of his dominions.'[47] Sixtus V, it is true, had a deep and personal aversion to Spain and a low estimate of its king, but these opinions were not peculiar to one pope. There were conflicts between Philip II and almost every pope with whom he dealt, which makes it impossible to explain those conflicts in terms of personalities and points to some deeper and more permanent cause. It also makes it impossible to speak of 'the forces of the Counter-Reformation' as though there were a crusading alliance between Spain and the papacy. Protestantism had very little to fear from co-operation between Spain and Rome. In the experience of both powers there was more conflict than co-operation, and it was conflict over two main issues, ecclesiastical jurisdiction and foreign policy.

Even in ecclesiastical affairs the pope's writ hardly ran in Spain.[48] The domination of the church by the crown was probably more complete in Spain in the sixteenth century than in any other part of Europe, including Protestant countries with an Erastian system. The power of the crown had developed not simply in the interests of absolutism but also in the interests of reform. Beginning with Ferdinand and Isabella, the Spanish church was reformed with the active encouragement of the crown, which succeeded in eliminating the practical applications of papal supremacy not only because they competed with royal sovereignty, but also because they were

[46] Much of the following material has already appeared in J. Lynch 'Philip II and the Papacy', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Series, ii. (1961), 23–42.

[47] Instructions addressed to Cardinal Caetani, legate of Sixtus V in France, regarding the settlement of the dynastic question in 1589, in M. de Boüard, *La légation du Cardinal Caetani en France, 1589–1590* (Bordeaux, 1932), p. 62. For further evidence of papal suspicion of Philip II, at different times, see Pastor, *History of the Popes*, xxi. 262–73; xxii. 47–64; xxiii. 195 ff.

[48] See Philippson, 'Felipe II y el Pontificado', *op. cit.*, pp. 91–160.

regarded as obstacles to reform. The crown's right to provide to bishoprics and abbacies was originally sought in part as a protective measure against the abuses of the papacy whose nepotism in Spain was notorious. Disputed from 1479, the right was definitely won by Charles V in 1523, when his former tutor, Adrian VI, granted him in perpetuity the right to appoint to bishoprics; by the end of the reign most of the other important and lucrative benefices in the Spanish church had also accrued to the crown. Consequently Philip II disposed of ecclesiastical benefices whose revenues amounted to vast sums of money, and was able to exercise a stranglehold on the personnel of the church. The Spanish clergy looked to the crown rather than to Rome, and Philip II, in spite of his devotion to the church and concern for reform, could not resist the temptation to exploit this power for political or economic ends. Appointments were preceded by financial arrangements whereby the grateful appointee engaged to pay the crown a percentage of his revenues.

Spain did not have an Act in Restraint of Appeals, but in fact appeals were restrained and a Spaniard had almost as little chance of appealing a case to Rome as an Englishman had. Based on the argument that the king was the protector of his subjects, including the clergy, and that they had a right of appeal to him, while Rome was too far away, the crown controlled ecclesiastical tribunals through the Council of Castile, which regarded itself as an ecclesiastical court of appeal and, supported by the Spanish hierarchy, consistently opposed appeals to Rome. The papacy considered this contrary to the decrees of the Council of Trent and complained about it. By a decree of 27 October 1572, however, the Council of Castile declared null and void papal briefs which cited Spaniards before foreign courts in ecclesiastical cases.[49] This made it impossible for the ecclesiastical tribunals of Rome to exercise any jurisdiction in Spain. From the Council of the Inquisition, which was appointed by the crown as has been seen, there was no appeal; in principle it was admitted that the pope, as supreme head of the church, had delegated power to the Spanish Inquisition, but once the authority had been delegated it was regarded as beyond recall.

There still remained the possibility that the pope might counter-attack with spiritual sanctions. Therefore these important prerogatives of the Spanish crown were protected by the right it claimed to scrutinise papal bulls and briefs and to prohibit their publication if they contradicted the laws and customs of the country. If the pope replied by excommunication, this was considered void in Spain and those who attempted to apply such bulls were punished by law.

[49] Serrano, ed., *Correspondencia diplomática entre España y la Santa Sede durante el Pontificado de S. Pio V*, i. 37–38; Philippson, *op. cit.*, pp. 151–52.

To preserve and extend his ecclesiastical prerogatives Philip II waged a relentless war with the papacy which formed a permanent background to their political relations. In this struggle with Rome he had the consistent support of the Spanish church. When Philip consulted his theologians and bishops, as he frequently did, they usually agreed with him. His bishops, of course, were appointed by him and he appointed men of strongly regalist views. Nevertheless, Spanish churchmen were in a dilemma; they owed their appointments to the crown but they could not, nor did they wish to, disavow the pope. Even when they were worried about this, however, they were less concerned about principles than about the practical difficulties that Philip could bring upon himself by the way he was behaving. As Inquisitor general, Cardinal Quiroga was careful to consult the papacy as well as the crown on all questions dealing with jurisdictional rights, and his advice to Philip was that the pope should be kept as content as possible.[50] The Dominican theologian, Melchor Cano, wrote a memorandum to Philip II on the subject, but he was clearly concerned with the practical effects of papal hostility. He reminded Philip that dealing with the pope required the greatest prudence, for even though he were personally weak he was still the vicar of Christ. If Philip challenged the authority of Rome, he might be damaging his own authority by breaking Catholic unity and weakening the traditional Christian authority in the minds of his own subjects. The pope could be very useful to Spain, especially in times of war, to rally public opinion in a religious way to the government's policies.[51]

Cano was referring to crusades against infidels and protestants. There was, however, a more urgent way in which the pope could be useful to Spain, and this was one of the reasons why Philip II never quite overstepped the mark. He needed the material as well as the moral support of the pope: the Spanish crown's financial interests were tied to the papacy. As supreme head of the church the pope disposed indirectly of ecclesiastical revenues without which Philip II would have been helpless in many of his undertakings. To a king whose resources were never equal to his commitments, this was not simply a minor or extraordinary income but, as has been seen, a permanent and major item in his budget,[52] and he could not get it without papal co-operation. For this reason, although his ambassadors might occasionally threaten the pope with schism, the papacy was too important to Philip II ever to be relinquished.

Before Spain and the papacy began to diverge on foreign policy,

[50] Quiroga to Philip II, 16 March 1574, British Museum, Egerton MS. 1506, fo. 18v.
[51] Melchor Cano to Philip II, B.M. Egerton MS. 444, fos. 19–52.
[52] See above, pp. 137–38.

constant tension was engendered by jurisdictional disputes. After his disastrous experience with the violently anti-Spanish Paul IV, with whom he was at war for the first two years of his reign, Philip II exerted his utmost influence in the conclave of 1559, where his efforts seemed to be rewarded with the election of Pius IV whose early policy, particularly in financial affairs, was accommodating. Philip, however, pressed the friendship too far, and on two outstanding matters he came into conflict with the papacy on a question of principle, the decrees of the Council of Trent and the case of Archbishop Carranza.[53] Not surprisingly even the docile Pius IV began to kick: Philip withdrew his ambassador in 1563 and the pope refused to renew the subsidy, which expired in 1564. The king and his agents soon discovered that they had even less chance of bullying Pius V, who was convinced that the supreme authority of the church should be real and not merely nominal. Indeed, they were at a loss as to how to deal with a pope who was a saint and not a politician. His ambassador, Requesens, warned Philip that he needed different treatment from other popes, because he did not recognise considerations of human prudence or reasons of state and would serve God regardless of practical and political consequences.[54] He was not prepared to yield to Spanish pressure and in particular he was not prepared to recognise the jurisdiction of the crown over the clergy and the practice of retaining bulls, both of which he regarded as violations of the rights of the church. At first he refused to concede the *subsidio* and the *cruzada*; among other things he was scandalised at the way the latter was preached and traded in Spain. Above all, however, Pius V was determined to take the Carranza case to Rome.

Carranza, as has been seen, had been imprisoned by the Spanish Inquisition as a Protestant heretic, despite the protests of the Council of Trent and the pope. By 1566 the case had become a struggle for ecclesiastical power between pope and king: the pope demanded that Carranza be tried in Rome, while the Spanish Inquisition, backed by the king, refused to hand him over. Pius V was more resolute than his predecessor, and on the grounds that the councils of the church reserved to the pope cognisance of episcopal cases and that Carranza could not get a fair trial in Spain, he was determined to bring the case and the person of the archbishop to his tribunal in spite of frequent requests of Requesens and the repeated letters of Philip himself that he should be tried in Spain.[55] The pope told Requesens that 'the day you see that I have changed my mind in this matter you will

[53] See above, pp. 257–62, for the Council of Trent, and pp. 255–56 for the Carranza case.
[54] Requesens to Philip II, 4 July 1566, *Corr. Dip.*, i. 287.
[55] *Corr. Dip.*, i. 174, 329, 337.

know that I have gone mad'.[56] He never did change his mind. Philip II, however, had equally strong reasons for his position. The claim of the Spanish Inquisition to judge so important a case in the interests of its own power and prestige, and in order to demonstrate that not even the primate of all Spain was exempt from its jurisdiction, was one that Philip could not ignore. He believed that he needed the Inquisition to govern Spain, and Requesens told the pope that the king considered he could not preserve religion in his dominions without defending the Inquisition against every thing.[57] There was also another point, and Pius V put his finger on it when he remarked that Philip wished to prolong the matter eternally because in the meantime he was enjoying the considerable revenues of the see of Toledo.[58] In the end Philip II yielded, and after more than seven years' imprisonment in Valladolid Carranza left for Rome in December 1566. How did Pius V overcome the obstinacy of the king and the tenacity of the Spanish Inquisition against all expectations? Some historians have argued that he feared the threats of the pope.[59] But the papal brief containing the said threats, and sent so secretly that even the papal secretary knew nothing of it, did not reach the nuncio who had to execute it in case of disobedience until some days after the king had resolved to submit.[60] It has also been claimed that Philip was genuinely influenced by the sanctity, disinterestedness and religious zeal of Pius V. There was no doubt, of course, that Philip II sincerely recognised the spiritual supremacy of the pope. But perhaps we can find another clue in the report of Requesens: 'There is no *cruzada* yet, but no doubt there will be when he gets satisfaction over Carranza.'[61] In any case it was done in such a way that the Spanish Inquisition managed to save its face: the pope allowed as many inquisitors as Philip cared to send to join the tribunal in Rome. And the tactics of the Spanish government and Inquisition still caused interminable delays, so that it was nine years later and after three successive popes had come into the case before a decision was reached in Rome. Carranza was found not guilty of heresy but made to abjure as 'highly suspect' sixteen propositions taken from his books, sentenced to five years' reclusion and suspended from exercise of his arch-episcopal functions during this period. Two months after sentence was passed he died.

Meanwhile, although conflict over jurisdiction continued, Pius V was not

[56] Requesens to Philip II, 23 February 1566, *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, lxviii. 455–56.
[57] *Corr. Dip.*, i. 49, 256, 271.
[58] Requesens to Philip II, 3 May 1566, *ibid.*, i. 224.
[59] Menéndez Pelayo, *Heterodoxos*, iv. 62; Lea, *History of the Inquisition of Spain*, ii. 79.
[60] *Corr. Dip.*, i. 298, 330.
[61] Serrano, *ibid.*, p. lxiii; Requesens to Philip II, 27 Dec. 1566, *ibid.*, i. 432.

in a position to hold himself aloof from Spain. His anxiety to organise a Christian league against the Turk, for which he knew he could only rely on Spain, forced him to seek an alliance with Philip II, which resulted in the organisation of the Holy League and the destruction of the Turkish fleet at Lepanto in October 1571. In these circumstances the pope had to bend to Philip II as the only monarch who would help him against the infidel and who was already pressed financially by the rebellions in the Low Countries and the Alpujarras. Religious objectives caused Pius V to come to the assistance of his ally, and by the beginning of 1571 he had not only renewed the *cruzada* but also the subsidy on the Spanish clergy for five years. The condition for the latter was that the king should maintain sixty galleys to fight the enemies of the church. In fact they were soon used for other purposes. For a moment Spanish political interests in the Mediterranean had coincided with papal religious objectives. But it was not Philip's intention to engage in a long-term campaign against the Turk. After Lepanto Spain no less than Venice began to withdraw from the alliance, and in spite of papal pressure Philip II began a policy of disengagement with regard to the Turk.[62] There was, therefore, no crusade in the Mediterranean.

The possibility of divergent policies had also shown itself in the Low Countries. In the final analysis papal and Spanish policy coincided in the Low Countries. Philip II regarded religious unity as the indispensable condition for political unity and consequently he never intended to tolerate heresy. Rome, unable to act by itself, considered that the only hope for Catholicism in the Low Countries lay in the success of the Spanish cause there. Whether Philip II tried negotiation or force the papacy supported him, and supported him financially, as has been seen. It had no alternative. That is not to say, however, that Philip II was serving the church. In the Low Countries he was fighting for his own political inheritance. While supporting the church, he refused to be guided by it. On the contrary, he continually imposed his own will on it and regarded it as a subordinate ally: he went so far as to say that he had not been sufficiently supported by the papacy in his policy towards the rebels.[63] In fact it took some time for Spanish and papal policy to settle down together in the Low Countries. At first Philip II had the pope as well as the rebels to contend with. From early in 1566 Pius V was urging him to go in person to the Low Countries and arguing that his presence there was the only safeguard for the church. He also sent his own nuncio to investigate. Philip II ignored the advice and

[62] See above, pp. 239–49.

[63] B. de Meester, *Le Saint-Siège et les troubles des Pays-Bas, 1566–1579* (Louvain, 1934), p. 159. See below, pp. 288–308.

objected to the nuncio. Month after month the pope continued to blame the unfortunate Philip for Catholic losses in the Low Countries, because he was not there in person, and the king's only reply was evasion.[64] When the news from the Low Countries became worse and Philip could no longer maintain an optimistic front to the pope, he protested his zeal for religion in words that have since been regarded as his political philosophy: 'You can assure His Holiness that rather than suffer the slightest prejudice to religion and the service of God I will lose all my states and a hundred lives if I had them, because I do not wish nor do I intend to be lord over heretics.'[65] But this was written to his ambassador in Rome for papal consumption and because he was not in fact doing what the pope wanted him to do, going to the Low Countries in person.

In another matter too he was out of step with the pope. Pius V wanted a peaceful remedy, a negotiated settlement, whereas Philip was coming to the conclusion that force was going to be necessary. Eventually he convinced the pope that only an army would solve the problem, though Pius thought that it would merely be necessary to frighten the rebels with a show of force.[66] Philip decided to send in the Duke of Alba and his Spanish *tercios*. But how was the king going to describe the war? Would he call it a war against heretics, a sort of holy war, or would he call it a war against rebels? The pope would have preferred that the accent be placed on its religious character, that it be called a war against heretics rather than the suppression of a rebellion. The Spanish view was different.[67] In an interview with the papal nuncio in Madrid, Alba insisted that the pope had nothing to do with this affair and that the war would be waged according to the same form as that used not long since by Charles V in his struggle against the German Lutherans; that is as a war governed by reasons of state against rebels. To present the situation like this, argued Alba, would better avoid the intervention of England or other Protestant powers in northern Europe to help their co-religionists, while it was in the interest of no ruler to condone rebellion even in the subjects of another. Moreover, to put the accent on the political aspect of the enterprise would enable Alba to recruit German Lutheran troops for his army. This advice prevailed. In the view of Spaniards they were fighting a punitive war against rebel subjects who were resisting their legitimate sovereign. The fact that Philip II was concerned to gloss over the religious aspect, of course, does not

[64] *Corr. Dip.*, i. 131, 156–57, 237–39, 299, 308–12.

[65] Philip II to Requesens, 12 August 1566, *ibid.*, i. 316.

[66] *Ibid.*, i. 399–403, 431.

[67] Meester, *op. cit.*, pp. 82–85; L. van der Essen, 'Croisade contre les hérétiques ou guerre contre des rebelles. La psychologie des soldats et des officiers espagnols de l'armée de Flandre au XVI^e siècle', *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, li. (1956), 55–57.

mean that he did not think he had good religious motives. These he took for granted. He was arguing in fact that he was fighting the rebellion on political and religious grounds, but that it was wiser to be discreet about the religious ones in case Protestant powers were provoked by the presence of a huge crusading army in northern Europe. Gradually, however, Philip II came to worry less about discretion. In his correspondence with his governors in Brussels he spoke of 'rebels and heretics'. When in 1586, two years before the dispatch of the Armada against England, the king of Denmark tried to serve as mediator between Philip II and Elizabeth I, the Spanish king disavowed all responsibility for the war, and in reply to the suggestion that he should grant liberty of conscience to the rebels he wrote to the Danish king: 'One should not ask me a thing like that. For if it is clear that other sovereigns do not allow their subjects to have a religion other than the one they themselves profess, for reasons of state as well as for religious motives, why then should this attitude be denied to me?'[68] After the death of Don John, Farnese continued to speak always of 'heretics and rebels', thus assimilating the political and the religious character of the struggle. And in the letters of soldiers and officers, as well as in the Spanish chroniclers of the sixteenth century, the royal army is always called 'the Catholic army', and the war is waged, according to them, 'to defend the Catholic religion'.[69]

In Philip II's policy towards England, however, there was no ambiguity: he refused to align himself with the papacy and he was guided by political and not religious considerations. It is well known that he long repudiated aggressive Catholic plans against England and sought to protect Elizabeth against the hostility of the papacy, because he had no wish to further the interests of Mary Queen of Scots and of France. Twice he stopped Elizabeth's excommunications: in 1561, after the queen had refused to receive the papal nuncio, and again in 1563, when he blocked the excommunication debated in the Council of Trent. As late as 1570, when the papal bull of excommunication was finally issued, without consultation with the Spanish king, he forbade its publication in his own states and did all he could to prevent its reaching England. He protested to the papal nuncio and wrote to his ambassador in London that the bull 'will embitter feelings in England and drive the Queen and her friends to oppress and persecute the few good Catholics who still remain there'.[70] To Elizabeth herself he wrote that no act of the pope had caused him such displeasure. Nevertheless, in 1569 Philip

[68] L. van der Essen, *Alexandre Farnèse, prince de Parme, gouverneur général des Pays-Bas* (5 vols., Brussels, 1933–39), v. 78.

[69] Van der Essen, 'Croisade contre les hérétiques ou guerre contre des rebelles', *op. cit.*, p. 58.

[70] Philip II to D'Espés, 30 June 1570, *C.S.P. Spanish, Eliz.* (London, 1892–99), ii. 254.

II had been tempted to do something about England, but this had nothing to do with papal or religious objectives. It was the result of a number of provocations of a naval and commercial nature—the English pirates, Hawkins in the Caribbean, the seizure of the Duke of Alba's pay ships. He toyed with the idea of supporting the movement of rebellion in the north of England in 1569 and told Alba to hold himself at the ready.[71] After the rebellion had started—and failed—he authorised Alba to prepare an armed attack against Elizabeth, arguing that the way of force seemed the only way left to him.[72] But the decision to move had to come from Alba who regarded himself as the arbiter of Spanish policy in northern Europe and who was wise enough to see the folly of attempting any expedition; in his view more could be gained by negotiation.[73] In 1571 Philip reacted in a similar manner to the Ridolfi plot. Ridolfi had no credit with the Duke of Alba but he got the blessing of the pope, who for some time had been pressing Philip to do something for English Catholics. In July the king urged Alba to prepare an expedition against England in order to co-operate in the dethronement of Elizabeth and the substitution of Mary Queen of Scots.[74] But this order need not be taken seriously, for once again the initiative was left to Alba. He tersely advised the king that the conspirators were not to be trusted, and once again Philip concurred. After the failure of the Ridolfi plot Philip II remained indifferent to the fate of English Catholics, whose numbers and weakness did not serve his policy.

Consequently there was no co-operation between Philip II and Gregory XIII for an enterprise of England. Throughout the 1570's Philip consistently ignored papal proposals for an attack on England. The defence of his interests in the Low Countries, in Portugal and in America were more pressing problems than the launching of a crusade against Elizabeth. And when he finally decided to organise an expedition for the invasion of England, it was for a series of political and economic reasons rather than religious ones, and its objective was to strike at the source of the English attack on Spain and the empire. Philip II wanted the co-operation of the papacy for financial reasons and for moral support in his claim to dispose of the crown of England. He might have procured this from Gregory XIII, but Sixtus V was much more difficult.

[71] L. P. Gachard, ed., *Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas* (5 vols., Brussels, 1848–79), ii. 63; *Documentos inéditos*, xc. 186–87; see also P. O. de Törne, *Don Juan d'Autriche et les projets de conquête de l'Angleterre, 1568–1578* (Helsingfors, 1915–28), i. 42 ff.

[72] Philip II to Alba, 16 December 1569, *Documentos inéditos*, xxxviii. 258; Philip II to Alba, 24 December 1569, *ibid.*, p. 273.

[73] Gachard, *op. cit.*, ii. 70.

[74] Philip II to Alba, 14 July 1571, Gachard, *op. cit.*, ii. 185–88; see also Törne, *op. cit.*, i. 112–13.

The election of Sixtus V in April 1585 was a blow to Philip's hopes. Both men personally disliked each other. Moreover, the energetic and independent character of the new pope soon showed itself in a series of disputes over jurisdiction and protocol, so that when the Armada was being prepared, both sovereigns were squabbling over whether the papal nuncio in Spain should be styled 'monsignor' or 'monsignor reverendissimo'. It is true that both king and pope had an interest in England, but it was not the same interest. Moved by his suspicion of Philip II and Spanish power, Sixtus at first preferred a peaceful approach to Elizabeth. This policy was based on a serious miscalculation—that the queen could be converted to Catholicism—and naturally earned the contempt of Philip. 'It would seem', he remarked in the margin of his ambassador's letter, 'that the war in Flanders does not appear to him a great undertaking, nor that he knows what it costs. He is deceived about England and labours under a delusion.'[75] After the execution of Mary Stuart, the pope himself ceased to be deceived, yet he never ceased to admire Elizabeth, constantly comparing her favourably with Philip and contrasting her successes with his failures. In the final analysis, however, the pope could not oppose Philip's attack on England. He had not the means of doing so and in any case he could not ignore the interests of Catholicism, however low these might be in Philip's list of priorities. Therefore, while he regretted the necessity of the Armada and deplored Spanish slowness, he gave it his financial as well as his moral support in the treaty of July 1587.[76] In addition he made great efforts to extract from Henry III at least a promise of French neutrality.[77] Yet it was an uneasy alliance. At the level of jurisdiction the running fight between pope and king continued with its usual acrimony, and a series of minor disputes over titles, precedence, protocol and jurisdiction were raised into major issues and ran concurrently with the preparation of the Armada, so that the two allies presented no united front and the pope was openly speaking of excommunicating the king of Spain.[78] Philip ceased writing to the pope and only communicated with him through his ambassador. The Venetian ambassador in Rome reported Sixtus as saying: 'The king and his Armada are becoming ridiculous, while Queen Elizabeth knows how to manage her affairs. If that woman were only a Catholic, she would be loved by us more than any other sovereign, for she has great qualities. . . . That Spanish Armada gives us anxiety. We have strong

[75] J. A. von Hübner, *Sixte-Quinte* (Paris, 1870), i. 329, 364–71, 372; ii. 476, 495, 500–504; iii. 4–5.

[76] Text of the Treaty of 29 July 1587 in A. O. Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth* (Eng. trans., London, 1916), pp. 520–23.

[77] Hübner, *op. cit.*, i. 392–94.

[78] Pastor, *op. cit.*, xxi. 269.

presentiments that it will not succeed.'[79] In the spring of 1588 the pope was full of pessimism and confided to the French ambassador that everything was going from bad to worse, that Philip was constantly asking for the subsidy which he had promised, but which he had promised only when success had attended their efforts and the expedition had landed.[80] From Philip's point of view, therefore, the alliance was not even bringing the money he hoped for and needed.

After the defeat of the Armada there was even less chance of persuading Sixtus to pay the subsidy. The Spanish ambassador in Rome, the count of Olivares, on hearing of the disaster from the Duke of Parma, was the first to tell the pope of it, and a series of stormy audiences followed. According to the terms of the treaty for the subsidies the pope owed the king a million *escudos*, which the ambassador now claimed. The pope refused to pay on the grounds that the provisions of the treaty did not apply to this payment, which was only due in the event of a landing being made in England, and he told Olivares to drop the subject. 'I find him', reported the ambassador, 'very lukewarm in his tokens of satisfaction whenever good news comes from Spain and not much affected by bad news from that quarter. Envy of Your Majesty's greatness and his horror at parting with money act more powerfully upon his nature than do the welfare of the church and zeal to see the annihilation of heresy in the world.'[81] The failure of the Armada, in fact, ruined the already tenuous relations between the two allies. Irritated in the extreme, Sixtus V began to doubt the power and capacity of Philip II and to reproach himself for having wasted his time and money. Unimpressed by Philip's difficulties and urgent demands, he never payed the million *escudos*. He now argued that he had never advised the sending of the Armada; the king had only been interested in subduing England and adding to his empire, while the last thing he had thought of was the restoration of Catholicism, which was the essential condition for the pope. It was more than simply want of faith, however, that made Sixtus V reserved towards his ally. He admitted that he was like a fly compared to an elephant before the king on whose dominions the sun never set.[82] The failure of the Armada, therefore, had its compensations. No more than any other sovereign in Europe did he want a universal monarchy under Philip II. He never disguised his opinion on the subject. To the Venetian envoy he more than once expressed his wish for a balance of power in Europe: 'Great Christian princes require a counterpoise; for if one prevails the others run the risk of giving in on many things which he

[79] Hübner, *op. cit.*, i. 389–91.

[80] *Ibid.*, p. 396.

[81] Olivares to Philip II, 26 Sept. 1588, *ibid.*, iii. 257–61.

[82] Pastor, *op. cit.*, xxi. 273.

may ask for.'[83] This was one of the reasons why he was anxious for the security of France. It was over the French problem, the final issue between Philip II and the papacy, that relations between the two completely collapsed and that their religious as well as their political interests most clearly diverged.

In September 1585 Henry of Navarre and Henry of Bourbon were declared heretics and pronounced incapable of succeeding to the throne of France.[84] Sixtus V soon regretted this mistake, which was due partly to his inexperience and partly to Spanish influence, and began to favour a policy of conciliation towards Henry of Navarre in the hope of his conversion. If Philip II, exploiting religious conflicts, succeeded in getting the crown of France, how could the pope then resist his power, which would dominate almost the entire Catholic world? And would he not then increase his pressure in Italy? The interests of religion as well as of politics caused the pope to work in France against the Spanish party and the League. In the mind of the king of Spain the question of the succession was the essential issue, while it was only secondary in the eyes of Sixtus V. To become eligible in the eyes of the papacy Henry of Navarre had only to return to Catholicism. Philip foresaw this and therefore he had to argue that his conversion could only be a pretence, for he refused to countenance the candidature of Henry on any account. Consequently in the years 1587–88 he made it clear in Rome that if the pope accepted Henry's conversion and candidature, then he would oppose it and fight, even if it meant the dismemberment of France. It was 1590 before the pope forced the issue with Spain, when he received in audience the Duke of Luxembourg who, as official representative of the Catholic supporters of Henry of Navarre but in reality sent by the king himself, had instructions to improve relations between Henry and the Roman Curia. Sixtus began to favour a reconciliation with the French monarchy on grounds of personal sympathy and of policy. Spanish opinion was outraged. Philip II and his ministers tried everything they knew to get the pope to dismiss Luxembourg, which provoked Sixtus into replying that he would listen 'to the devil himself if he came here'. Eventually Philip instructed his ambassador, Olivares, to force the pope to ratify the promises made in his favour and in particular to dismiss the Duke of Luxembourg, to excommunicate all French prelates who were supporters of Henry of Navarre, and to declare that as a relapsed heretic the latter could not be admitted to the bosom of the church and was incapable of succeeding to the throne of France. The pope was unwilling

[83] Hübner, *op. cit.*, ii. 516.

[84] For the following see Hübner, *op. cit.*, ii. 168, 172–76, 288, 298, 307, 351–52; iii. 477–91.

to do any of these things, and after Olivares had had recourse to intimidation, threatening schism and coercive measures, there took place between them that violent interview in which Olivares in the name of his king threatened the pope with a public protest against his conduct, while Sixtus called the count a 'criminal, scandalous creature, the cause of all these troubles', and threatened to expel him from Rome. Philip tried another ambassador and maintained the pressure, with some apparent success. He received the promise that Rome would never recognise as king of France anyone who did not have the approval of Philip II; Luxembourg ceased to receive audience; and on 19 July 1590 an offensive and defensive alliance was concerted between the pope and the Spanish ambassador. But this was merely a draft of a convention and not a signed treaty. Moreover, the pope always found new pretexts for modifying the fulfilment of this agreement and he successfully refused to commit himself to Spain. Consequently the news of his death in August 1590 was received with relief in Spain in the conviction that there could not possibly be another pope who was a greater enemy of Spaniards. Clement VIII, however, was equally reluctant to serve Spanish policy. Unwilling to oppose the victorious and converted Henry IV simply to satisfy Spanish interests, or to provoke a schism between France and Rome for purely political reasons that had little to do with the papacy, in September 1595 the pope absolved and recognised the monarch whom Philip II still considered simply as the prince of Béarn and a relapsed heretic and with whom he had been at war since January of the same year.

The conflict between Philip II and the papacy over France summarises the essential issues between the two. Philip II believed that he had the right to tell the pope what was best for the church. The pope believed that Philip was confusing what was best for the church with what was best for Spanish interests. In the midst of the stormy interviews with Olivares, Sixtus V wrote to Philip II reminding him of the obligation under which the pope was to listen to heretics, protesting against the threats of councils and schisms, and declaring that he could not admit that secular princes should constitute themselves judges of the vicar of Christ. Philip II's view of papal obligations and his own rights was quite different. In his answer to the pope he wrote:

> Nothing has surprised me more than to see your Holiness, after an act inspired by God (the bull against Henry of Navarre) leaving time to the heretics to take root in France, without even ordering that the Catholic partisans of 'the Béarnais' should separate from his cause. The church is on the eve of losing one of its members; Christendom is on the point of being set on fire by the united heretics; Italy runs the greatest danger,

> and in the presence of the enemy we look on and we temporise! And the blame is put upon me because, looking at those interests as if they were my own, I hasten to your Holiness as to a father whom I love and respect and as a good son remind him of the duties of the Holy See! By God's mercy, where have you found in the whole course of my life reasons for thinking of me as you tell me men think of me, and by what right do you tell it me? God and the whole world know my love for the Holy See, and nothing will ever make me deviate from it, not even your Holiness by the great injustice you do me in writing such things to me. But the greater my devotion the less I shall consent to your failing in your duty towards God and towards the Church, who have given you the means of acting; and, at the risk of being importunate to your Holiness and displeasing you, I shall insist on your setting to the task.[85]

In the pope's eyes the task in question was one of serving Spanish political interests in France. But Philip II was not the first ruler, nor the last, to believe that his own interests and those of religion were identical.

[85] *Ibid.*, ii. 304; iii. 451.

CHAPTER IX

THE TURNING POINT: TO THE ATLANTIC AND THE NORTH

SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM, that constant advocate of an English-led Protestant league against Spain, wrote to the Earl of Leicester from his embassy in France in 1571: 'I conclude that we rest on evil terms with Spain, whereof there must grow redress either by composition or by sword. Redress by composition may seem scarce sure, as that which will serve their turn for a while, they can disguise their malice for a time. Redress by the sword, comparing our forces with theirs may appear at first sight void of all possibility. But if you consider the opportunity that this present time offereth. . . .'[1] The advice, inverting the terms, might equally have been given to Philip II by any of his more militant advisers, for Spain too had its Walsinghams and England its weaknesses. But Spain's greatest general was not one of the war-mongers. If the Duke of Alba, archetype of the Castilian warrior, whose whole life was dedicated to the sword, preferred redress by composition and sought accommodation with England, the reason must have been compelling indeed. The reason was the Netherlands, Walsingham's 'opportunity' but for the Duke of Alba and his sovereign a trap from which there was no escape. Here Alba's reputation was torn to shreds: sent by Philip II in 1567 to reduce his rebellious subjects to obedience, six years later he was caught in the rising tide of revolution, 'not only', as he himself put it, 'up to my neck but over my head'.[2] Philip II's tiny dominion in the north became a gigantic battlefield, the weakest sector of his defences, consuming his men and money voraciously. Here his political, religious, and economic interests were starkly exposed, his policies resisted by his own subjects, and his difficulties exploited by his foreign enemies. In these conditions Elizabeth I did not need to attack Spain, and Philip II could not afford to attack England. From 1567 Spain was pinned down on two fronts, in the Mediterranean and in the Low Countries. For the following ten years, until he could disengage from the Turk, Philip II's double commitments

[1] Quoted in Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth* (3 vols., Oxford, 1925), i. 153.
[2] Alba to Philip II, 24 Feb. 1573, *Epistolario del III Duque de Alba, Don Fernando Alvarez de Toledo*, ed. Duke of Alba (3 vols., Madrid, 1952), iii. 294.

overlapped in time and stretched his resources to breaking point, so that in 1575 he was forced to declare the second state bankruptcy of the reign. These were reasons enough to prevent his seeking redress from England by the sword and from indulging in anything beyond defence and diplomacy. Like Elizabeth he preferred to wait and see.

1. The Revolt of the Netherlands

After Charles V abdicated the sovereignty of the Netherlands to Philip II in 1555 the people of the seventeen provinces found themselves ruled, not by an emperor, but by a foreign king. This in itself was a loss of status. To be part of an empire, equal to the other parts, was one thing, to be a dominion of Spain was another. Philip II's attempt to rule his dominion by the absolutist methods with which he was familiar in Castile made the situation doubly intolerable and created opposition—opposition to the king of a foreign country and its system of government. To Spain the Netherlands were equally foreign. Unlike Castile and Aragon, they were not an integral part of the crown's inheritance but an appendage recently acquired. Why, then, was Philip II determined to hold them at all costs? What were they worth to Spain?

Materially their worth was immense. After the Indies they were Castile's most important economic life-line, a market for her wool and a source of vital goods and services. By the middle of the sixteenth century Antwerp was the greatest commercial centre in Europe, an entrepôt between north and south, trading not only in the manufactures of the Netherlands themselves but also in agricultural and industrial goods from the rest of Europe and in a growing volume of colonial products. The large reserves of capital thus accumulated made it a centre of international finance, where governments as well as private merchants sought loans. On both accounts, commercial and financial, Antwerp had clients all over Europe, but especially in Spain. Every year large fleets sailed from Bilbao and Laredo to the Low Countries, and an even larger volume of Netherlands shipping sought the ports of the peninsula. The Spanish and Portuguese merchant colonies in Antwerp were larger than those of any other nation: an estimate covering the years 1553–54 accounted for 200 Spanish merchants, and by 1560 the Spanish colony numbered 300.[3] In the same period exports to the Iberian countries accounted for two-thirds of the total exports of the Netherlands.

[3] L. van der Essen, 'Contribution à l'histoire du port d'Anvers et du commerce des Pays-Bas vers l'Espagne et le Portugal à l'époque de Charles Quint (1553–1554)', *Bulletin de l'Académie royale d'Archéologie de Belgique*, iii. (1920), 39–64; see also J.-A. Goris, *Étude sur les colonies marchandes méridionales (Portugais, Espagnols, Italiens), à Anvers de 1488 à 1567* (Louvain, 1925), p. 70.

The Spanish market, in fact, was vital to the Netherlands, for it helped to restore their adverse balance of trade with England, Italy, Germany, and France, and this was one reason why some kind of political link with Spain was not necessarily inimical to them.

But whatever the value of Spain to the Netherlands, the Netherlands had greater value to Spain. From them or through them Spain received textiles (accounting for 30 per cent. of the exports from Antwerp to the peninsula), metal and metallurgical products needed for equipping domestic and colonial agriculture and industry, arms for her military forces, and mercury for her silver mines. Above all, she received two vital commodities—cereals and naval stores. English and Baltic grain supplemented Spain's imports from France and the Mediterranean countries, and helped to make good the chronic shortages of cereals from which she suffered, while timber and other naval stores from the Baltic were an urgent necessity to a sea power whose demands outstripped domestic resources.[4] These goods, of course, were not produced by the Netherlands themselves, but their merchants specialised in buying them cheaply and they possessed the shipping to transport them to Spain. Against these imports Spain sent to the Low Countries colonial products such as spices, sugar, cochineal, and hides, and important supplies of salt, oil, wine, fruits, and saffron. But her greatest export was wool, for which the Low Countries were her most important market, absorbing about 60 per cent. of the total Spanish product.[5] By the sixteenth century the wool of Castile had largely replaced the English product in the textile centres of the Netherlands, partly because of the decline of English exports and partly because the political link with the Low Countries provided favourable conditions of competition for Spanish merchants.[6]

Spain, then, had a considerable stake in the Low Countries. She did not profit directly, of course, from all their commercial activities, but she had a share in their wealth, her merchants were deeply involved in their trade, and they were an important and protected market for her few, and therefore vital, exports.[7] Moreover, they supplied indispensable commodities which the state as well as its subjects needed and which relieved it of the necessity of depending entirely on foreign suppliers or on foreign shipping. In the final analysis, perhaps, most of these assets could have been preserved under a different relationship than direct possession exercised by absolute government. But Philip II knew no other relationship. Even if the Low Countries had been devoid of economic value to him, he would still have regarded

[4] V. Vázquez de Prada, *Lettres Marchandes d'Anvers* (4 vols., Paris, 1960–61), i. 67–87.
[5] Carande, *Carlos V y sus banqueros. i. La vida económica de España*, 57–59.
[6] C. Viñas y Mey, *Los Paises Bajos en la política y en la economía mundial de España* (Madrid, 1944), p. 330.
[7] On Spain's balance of payments problem see above, pp. 150–52.

them as his rightful inheritance, as indeed they were. And in his eyes there was only one way of governing them—by the absolute methods he used in the rest of his dominions. Anything less he could not trust; short of absolutism he believed he could not impose his will, least of all in religion. He refused to tolerate Protestantism; apart from the question of conscience, which was probably decisive in his case, experience showed that Protestants did not tolerate Catholics, and it was inconceivable to him that he should allow his Catholic subjects to be persecuted by heretics. The logic was inexorable. But it was also incomplete, for the majority of his subjects in the Low Countries were Catholics and remained so for many years to come.

Religion, in fact, was only part of the complex of Philip II's policy in the Low Countries, as it was of that of his opponents there. Absolutism had yet another end in view—revenue. Philip II was not indifferent to the opinions and the interests of his merchants, if only because he wanted to tax them. For the same reason he was interested in the wealth of the Low Countries, an irresistible target for a government at its wits' end to finance the war with which his reign began. It was not easy to tax the Low Countries, but he never gave up hope of making them contribute to the expenses of his policy in northern Europe. As long as the war continued, until 1559, the day of reckoning was postponed, for Philip was forced to conciliate the Estates (the provincial and general assemblies with whom he had to negotiate taxation), while they were prepared to concede at least a portion of his financial demands. The crisis was deferred to the post-war years when the king was not so ready to compromise and his subjects saw less reason to contribute. But in Philip's view the reason was just as urgent, for he had to meet the onerous debt left by the wars and rescue his finances from impending disaster. To tap the wealth of the Netherlands effectively he had to use methods of government more absolute than those of his predecessors in order to break through the constitutional restraints on his authority. In this way the political and financial problems merged: absolutism and taxation went hand in hand. This procedure was perfectly consistent with his principles of government. He ruled the component parts of his empire by a combination of central authority and regional devolution, allowing such local autonomy as was compatible with his sovereignty. But what was possible to overlook in Aragon and Catalonia, where, as has been seen, there was little at stake and where the central authority was close enough to intervene if necessary, could not be ignored in the Low Countries, where there were vital issues at stake—religion and revenue—and where central authority was already attenuated by the factor of distance.

The obstacles in the way of taxation were real. The grants of subsidies, whether in general or provincial assemblies, were subject to allotment by

the provincial Estates, and they were never permanent. Moreover, if the tax yielded any surplus over the absolute total agreed upon, then the surplus remained not in the royal treasury but with the separate Estates. These conditions had long been experienced by Charles V. In 1542 he tried to improve the crown's position: he asked the various Estates to agree to the innovation of direct taxes at fixed rates. Most of the Estates were induced to accept an income tax set at 10 per cent. on real and at lower rates on personal property and salaries. But the emperor did not attempt to deprive the Estates of their political rôle in the allotment and collection of the tax, both of which remained in their hands.[8] It was a compromise, and for this reason the Estates were persuaded to co-operate. But Philip II was not prepared to compromise; debate over allotment and delay in collection were inimical to his sovereignty and inadequate for his needs. Yet he began his reign more dependent on the Estates than his father had been. In 1556 he proposed an income tax, but he was refused by the Estates then and again in 1558, and he had to be content with antiquated extraordinary grants, subject to allotment and collection by the Estates. Their greatest concession was the Nine Years' Aid of 1558, which yielded 800,000 Flemish pounds a year; but officers of the Estates assessed the taxes, and collected them, and it was before them that the troops paraded to receive their pay. Granvelle observed that the system was perfectly devised to place royal finances in the hands of merchants. And worse was to come. In 1559 the Estates drew up a list of political grievances, and increasingly they became the vehicle of resistance to Philip's methods of government. He instructed his regent secretly never to convoke them again.

His regent was his half-sister, Margaret of Parma, whom he left in charge of the Low Countries when he returned to Spain in 1559. Margaret was the illegitimate daughter of Charles V, her mother was Flemish, and she had been brought up in the Low Countries. But she was clearly a 'Spanish' governor, and she was bound by her instructions. These enjoined her in matters of policy to take the advice of three members of the Council of State, of whom the most important was Antoine Perrenot, Lord of Granvelle, the son of Charles V's principal minister, a Burgundian, but as devoted to the Spanish crown as any Spaniard. This inner committee thus usurped the functions of the Council of State and thereby deprived the higher nobility of the Netherlands of any responsibility for government. Native councillors, like William of Orange and Lamoral of Egmont, who had expected Philip II to govern through them, the natural leaders of the country and the traditional advisers of the king, soon discovered that the Council was a mere mask

[8] G. Griffiths, 'Representative Institutions in the Spanish Empire in the sixteenth century. II. The Low Countries', *The Americas*, xii. (1956), 233–45.

behind which Philip governed through Cardinal Granvelle. Aware of their resentment, the regent advised Philip to exercise restraint, with some effect: in 1561 he withdrew his *tercios*—a concession to his financial advisers in Spain rather than to his political opponents in the Netherlands—and in 1564 he removed the hated Granvelle. But concessions only led to further demands, and as resistance to royal authority became more general so it grew in content. A deputation representing the lesser nobility presented a demand to the regent (April 1566) to moderate the enforcement of the decrees against heretics and reduce the operations of the Inquisition. In the course of the summer of 1566 she was forced to accede to their demands. Thus the alienation of the nobility assisted the progress of militant Calvinism.

The fact was that the Netherlands were only one of a number of problems which pressed themselves upon Philip II and had to take their place in his order of priorities. In the period 1559–66 his hands were tied by more urgent commitments in the Mediterranean. The maritime offensive of the Ottoman Turk and his ally in the west, Algiers, forced Spain to fight a long and costly war of defence and counter-attack in which the first respite did not occur until the death of Suleiman the Magnificent in late 1566. These immediate dangers prevented Philip from assigning sufficient men and money to the Netherlands to stifle the growth of opposition there. The Netherlands nobles were fully aware of the link between the two fronts and exploited it, while the best Philip could do was to buy time. Thus he had to watch the development of a concerted opposition, reduce Spanish troops, recall Granvelle, allow his central government to be eroded by noble power, and even moderate the heresy laws in 1566. But concessions only gave heart to his enemies and finally led to religious disorder and outrage.[9]

Protestantism had come to the Netherlands in three forms. By 1519 Lutheranism had already made considerable progress in Antwerp among the Augustinian friars and the resident Hanseatic merchants, while converted Spanish and Portuguese Jews actively promoted the new faith.[10] It soon spread throughout the south, but its penetration remained sporadic, and organised Lutheran communities survived only in Antwerp and perhaps in Bruges. Then Anabaptism, with its apocalyptic vision of the kingdom

[9] On the revolt of the Netherlands see P. Geyl, *The Revolt of the Netherlands* (London, 1932); E. H. Kossmann and A. F. Mellink, *Texts Concerning the Revolt of the Netherlands* (Cambridge, 1975); Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt* (London, 1977); Geoffrey Parker also studies the wider context of the revolt, including the link with the Mediterranean, in *Spain and the Netherlands, 1559–1659: Ten Studies* (London, 1979), pp. 28–29. On Granvelle see M. Van Durme, *El Cardenal Granvela (1517–1586)* (Barcelona, 1957), pp. 199–271. See also above, pp. 104–7.

[10] L. E. Halkin, *La Réforme en Belgique sous Charles-Quint* (Brussels, 1957).

of God on earth, and its revolutionary appeal to the socially oppressed, began to stir the urban masses in the late 1520's, and provided the majority of the Protestant martyrs in the southern Netherlands, perhaps 1,000 out of 1,600 victims of repression under Charles V. Finally Calvinism, propagated from Geneva and Strasbourg, penetrated the Walloon regions in the period 1540–45, and from towns like Tournai and Valenciennes gradually extended its base into Flanders, to reach Antwerp by the mid-1550's. Antwerp, with its foreign merchants, its clandestine printing presses, its semi-autonomous government, a stronghold of the Lutherans and a haven for the Anabaptists, now became a bulwark of the Calvinist community of the southern Netherlands. And the central government, the provincial council of justice, and the papal Inquisition all failed to quell its newest dissenters.

This was the situation which Philip II inherited and to deal with it he continued the policy of his father, issuing 'placards', or edicts against heresy, and pursuing it with the Inquisition. Yet within a few years he was faced with a revolutionary opposition beyond anything his father had experienced. The difference cannot be explained entirely in terms of the personality and policy of the new king. It is true that Philip II was more inflexible than the emperor, who had allowed the Inquisition to be excluded from certain provinces, had mitigated the 'placards' of 1550 in their application to Antwerp, and had applied them in general with a moderation which was alien to Philip II and which he was determined to end. On the other hand, contrary to the rumour which circulated in the Netherlands and which played some part in exciting the opposition of Catholics as well as Protestants, he never intended to introduce the Spanish Inquisition. The reason was simple, and he gave it himself: 'The story they invent that we wish to introduce the Spanish Inquisition there is false and without foundation, because the Inquisition of the Low Countries is more merciless than the one here.'[11] He was referring to the fact that the Inquisition in the Netherlands, canonically papal but with appointments in fact controlled by the crown, followed a procedure which allowed no pardon even to repentant heretics. So Philip II was content with the institution he inherited from the emperor and urged it to greater efforts. Yet even this was not sufficient to account for the greater resistance to royal authority. The decisive difference was in conditions. Most of the heretics executed under Charles V were Anabaptists, whom everyone hated and in whose repression Charles received the co-operation

[11] Philip II to Margaret of Parma, 17 July 1562, quoted in M. Dierickx, S.J., 'La politique religieuse de Philippe II dans les anciens Pays-Bas', *Hispania*, xvi. (1956), 130–43, especially p. 137.

of the ruling classes of the Netherlands. But by 1559 there was a change; the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis opened the southern frontier to increasing numbers of Calvinists who now penetrated more deeply than they had done in the previous reign. Calvinism was more successful than Lutheranism or Anabaptism because it was organised efficiently, possessed a propaganda machine, and was part of an international movement with directing and recruiting bases outside the Netherlands. Its leaders preached and prompted active resistance to the authorities, and made Calvinism the focus of organised opposition, which, as it lacked the social overtones of Anabaptism, drew adherents from the lower nobility and the burghers.[12] After the departure of Granvelle, the tolerance, or indifference, of magnates like Orange and Egmont, allowed it to spread in all the southern provinces, and the Netherlands officials, affected by Erasmist ideas of toleration and hostile to the Inquisition, were reluctant to execute the 'placards' against heresy. In June 1565 a commission of three bishops, three professors of Louvain, and three high officials, advised Philip to exercise moderation, but advice like this only convinced the king—probably rightly—that he could not rely on local officials and that moderation would allow Calvinism to win further successes. Consequently, in October 1565 he again insisted on a rigorous application of the anti-heresy laws by the Inquisition, and he refused to regard himself bound by the concessions that Margaret of Parma was forced to make in the summer of 1566. Instead, he began to prepare a new policy and new instruments.

By this time he had already given the opposition further cause for resentment. For Philip II had a policy of reform as well as repression. In the spirit of the Counter-Reformation he introduced the Jesuits into the Netherlands, founded the University of Douai, and—more significantly—in 1559 created fourteen new bishoprics in which he incorporated some abbacies. To both bishoprics and abbacies he had rights of presentation, with an understanding that his candidates would be appointed by the pope. The measure was needed in the interests of ecclesiastical reform, but it also had political repercussions, for in one move Philip increased the number of his supporters in the Estates General, where the prelates would have seats, and extended his rights of patronage at the expense of the local nobility. Thus his policy was interpreted even by his Catholic opponents as another example of Spanish intervention.

By 1566, therefore, the interaction of Philip II's policy and local conditions had created a revolutionary situation. His absolutist methods stimulated an

[12] See H. G. Koenigsberger, 'The Organization of Revolutionary Parties in France and the Netherlands during the Sixteenth Century', *Journal of Modern History*, xxvii. (1955), 335–51.

already latent opposition, but this opposition was not homogeneous, for it represented the interests of different political, religious, and economic groups. The higher nobility objected to the removal of political opportunities which the introduction of bureaucratic government entailed, and their resentment was increased by the parlous state of their private finances, hit by inflation and by their own heavy expenditure.[13] As their economic position was being undermined, they were all the more dependent on political or administrative careers; once they lost their monopoly of civil and ecclesiastical preferment they would lose the opportunity of compensating for the decline of income from their estates. This is precisely what Philip II's method of government threatened to do. The lower nobility were even more heavily in debt; dependent on fixed incomes from land, they were particularly hit by rising prices from about 1550 and desperately searching for opportunities to extricate themselves from their predicament.[14] And their opportunities were even less than those of the higher nobility. Yet the aristocracy were not revolutionaries: they wanted to capture the machinery of state without subverting the social and religious order. But, under cover of their estrangement from the crown and of the universal resentment of Philip II's ecclesiastical policies, the Calvinists were able to come out into the open and defy the authorities. In spite of their converts among burghers and lower nobility, the majority of the population was still nominally Catholic; but there was much religious indifference and many 'politiques' who were prepared to work with any religious group that opposed the Spanish administration. Calvinism, however, was not a proletarian movement, as Anabaptism had been. There are reasons for believing, moreover, that working-class conditions in the Netherlands under Philip II were less oppressive than in the reign of his father; conditions of industry and trade were good until at least 1580, in spite of political conditions, and from about 1556 wages began to catch up with prices.[15] The political and religious opposition of the privileged classes would only receive mass support when economic conditions were oppressive and people sought release from their misery and hunger. This was rare in Philip II's reign, when the ratio between incomes and prices was generally favourable to wage-earners. But a crisis of subsistence did occur in 1566, and for a brief period the different elements of political,

[13] G. Griffiths, *William of Hornes, Lord of Hèze, and the Revolt of the Netherlands (1576–1580)* (Berkeley, Calif., 1954), pp. 9–15.

[14] H. G. Koenigsberger, 'Property and the Price Revolution (Hainault, 1474–1573)', *Economic History Review*, Second Series, ix. (1956), 1–15.

[15] C. Verlinden, J. Craeybeckx, and E. Scholliers, 'Mouvements des prix et des salaires en Belgique au XVI[e] siècle', *Annales. Économies. Sociétés. Civilisations*, x. (1955), 173–98; Verlinden, 'Crises économiques et sociales en Belgique à l'époque de Charles-Quint', *Charles-Quint et son temps*, pp. 177–90; and see below, pp. 308–13.

religious, and social protest coincided. When the resistance of the nobles to Philip II's methods of government brought about a moderation in the enforcement of the anti-heresy laws, Calvinists moved into action, and hunger added working-class violence to what was momentarily a collective opposition. The result was a great outburst of riots in the towns in August 1566, accompanied by looting of churches and monasteries and wholesale destruction of Catholic religious iconography.

Violence against his own religion in his own dominions shocked Philip II profoundly. He determined to suppress the opposition by force before it was too late. The task was formidable, for the opposition was no longer in its infancy and it was difficult to identify it accurately, dispersed as it was among different groups and interests. Whom should he strike—the Catholic nobles or the Calvinists? The former were themselves alarmed by the explosive results of even partial toleration, and after the events of August there was a reaction in favour of authority and Catholicism, which Margaret of Parma skilfully exploited to restore order. If not pressed too far, the nobles might possibly be won back to allegiance. At the same time, once the economic crisis of 1565–66 had passed, there was no longer mass support for the opposition from the politically inert. This left only the Calvinists. Now was the moment, Margaret of Parma advised Philip in the spring of 1567, to make concessions, this time from a position of strength. Philip II ignored the advice, and his reasons are not far to seek. Moderation had been tried and had failed: it compromised his own authority and allowed Protestants to terrorise Catholics. It was the dual nature of his objectives, political as well as religious, which drove him to adopt a policy of total repression. He had no desire to isolate the religious opposition by making bargains with his political opponents, for he was convinced the time had come to bring the latter to heel. To make his sovereignty effective he was prepared to use its ultimate sanction—the army. A pause in the conflict with the Ottoman Turk enabled him to send to the Netherlands all the Spanish troops who had served in the Mediterranean theatre of war; together with German and Netherlands units, these briefly gave him an army of 60,000 for the northern front.

2. From Alba to Farnese

In December 1566 Philip II had already commissioned the Duke of Alba to proceed to Italy and assemble an army out of the veteran Spanish forces stationed there.[16] Slowly but, given the difficulties of distance and the king's

[16] L. P. Gachard, ed., *Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas*, ii. 600–602, 619–22.

other commitments, with a superb effort of organisation, the *tercios* of Lombardy, Naples, and Sicily were moved northwards, and on 9 August 1567 their vanguard entered Brussels. With it came its general and Philip's new governor, the Duke of Alba. His mission was to crush the political and religious opposition, and at the same time to complete the process of centralisation and absolutism, or, as his secret instructions told him, 'to make all the states into one kingdom, with Brussels its capital'.[17] He moved quickly into action. Side-stepping the Council of State and other local institutions, he struck at the opposition with a new instrument, the Council of Troubles, or Council of Blood, as it came to be called. This was a tribunal of seven, three of whom were Spaniards, operating with virtually absolute powers under the presidency of the governor himself. Its purpose was to root out heresy, but it was equally concerned with destroying the political opposition. Anticipating the danger, William of Orange escaped across the German frontier but others were slower. The counts of Egmont and Hornes were lured to Alba's headquarters in Brussels and there arrested in September 1567. The new governor was also equal to military threats. Orange recruited an army in Germany, and in the spring of 1568 launched the first attack on the Spanish occupation forces, hoping this would attract noble and popular support; but the reaction against the religious riots of 1566 had gone too far to permit an alliance of the political and religious oppositions. As a further deterrent to any who were wavering in their allegiance, Alba executed Egmont and Hornes in the main square of Brussels on 5 June. Having terrorised the nobility and isolated Orange, he then overwhelmed the invading troops with his own superior forces.

Confident of his strength, Alba proceeded with his programme of political repression and pursuit of heresy, with a ruthlessness that has earned him universal condemnation. He himself, of course, was a soldier, and his political philosophy was simple: 'Kings are born to give orders, subjects to obey them.'[18] He had long been advocating a policy of repression, and his views were known to Philip II; he was also acting under instructions. Responsibility for what followed, therefore, must be shared between him and his sovereign. Alba himself did not consider his methods particularly cruel. Referring to the imprisonment of Egmont and Hornes, he wrote: 'It would have been easy to arrest more, but the intention of the king was not to spill blood, nor am I partial to that; if it is possible to remedy the situation here by any other means, those means will be taken, for it is not intended to uproot this vineyard, only to prune it.' To Philip II himself he

[17] In A. L. E. Verheyden, *Le Conseil des Troubles. Liste des condamnés (1566–1573)* (Brussels, 1961), p. 508.

[18] *Epistolario del III Duque de Alba*, i. 58.

wrote: 'The tranquillity of these states is not to be gained by beheading men who are moved by the persuasion of others.'[19] He seems, in fact, to have intended to instil terror by example, and to crush the opposition by eliminating its leaders. But he cast his net widely, and what was to him a 'pruning' operation, to the people of the Netherlands was a widespread attack on their lives and property. Could the thousands of victims of the Council of Troubles, drawn as they were from all social classes, be regarded as leaders? Between 1567 and 1573 the tribunal condemned 12,302 people, of whom 1,105 were executed or banished.[20] Superficially it was accomplishing the objects for which it had been established, but beneath the surface it was stirring up yet greater resentment. Its policy of political repression helped to revive resistance to the Spanish monarchy and its agents. Anyone with political or administrative responsibility lived in fear of its dread hand, and its heavy confiscation of property hit heirs as well as victims. The question of property was important: this was to be seen unmistakably in the reaction to the second stage of Alba's programme.

Alba was expected to raise money as well as restore order—money to finance his army and administration, so that the Netherlands could be ruled without subsidies from Spain. And he was expected to do this by methods which did not compromise royal authority or involve any concessions to the Estates. By March 1569 he was ready to meet the Estates—and to extinguish them. He proposed a 1 per cent. non-recurrent income tax on property, together with sales taxes of 10 per cent. on personal and 5 per cent. on real property. The Estates were deprived of any rôle in administering these taxes, and the sales taxes were intended to relieve the crown of the need ever to consult them again.[21] The Estates objected on two grounds. Politically the permanent nature of the sales tax—which looked suspiciously like the Spanish *alcabala*—threatened their very existence, while its social implications augured ill for their traditional privileges. For the new taxes were designed to tap the national income rationally, irrespective of privilege and exemption, and they were intended to fall on those best able to pay, simply according to the value of property or the price of its sale. Under the old system, however, whereby the Estates themselves assessed taxation within an agreed total, those represented in them passed the burden elsewhere, the nobles and clergy to the third estate, the third estate to unrepresented towns and the rural population, with the result that those whose interests were powerfully

[19] Alba to Requesens, 14 Sept. 1567, *ibid.*, i. 675; Alba to Philip II, 14 Sept. 1567, *ibid.*, i. 672–73.

[20] Verheyden, *op. cit.*, pp. 22–477.

[21] Griffiths, 'Representative Institutions in the Spanish Empire in the sixteenth century. II. The Low Countries', *op. cit.*, pp. 240–42.

represented—Antwerp, for example—escaped comparatively lightly. This was the whole point of their debating and administering the rates of assessment. Alba, of course, was not a precursor of modern principles of taxation: he was interested in revenue not welfare. But there were elements of equity and efficiency in his proposals, and if they were a threat to political freedom they were also incidentally an attack on social injustice. Certainly the Estates saw them as an attack on the privileged classes, as well as on the institution in which they were represented. And the attack came in the form of absolutism, for although Alba 'convoked' the Estates he did so in a peculiar way: he met them not as a corporate or general body but in separate interviews with the representatives of each province, forbidding them to have any conference with deputies of other provinces.

It was one thing to order, another to execute. Revenue was raised from the income tax, but not to the required amount. Then, after a two-year compromise subsidy, the sales tax came into operation in 1571.[22] With his usual contempt for commoners, Alba believed that resistance would be impossible, because the main burden would fall not on the clergy or nobility but on merchants and tradesmen. But the formula which worked in Spain could not be applied to the Netherlands, though Alba's miscalculation was political not economic. Indeed the economic effects of his fiscal policy have been traditionally exaggerated: industry and trade were not brought to a standstill, nor were their promoters abruptly ruined.[23] But the political effects went deep. Even if property owners in the Netherlands had wealth enough to contribute to the cost of government, they objected to financing a foreign government and a foreign administration. By these measures Alba built up further stores of resentment against his régime, and ultimately drew into opposition many who had been unmoved by the agitation for political or religious autonomy.

For the moment, however, there was still no sign of rebellion from the mass of the people. In any case Alba's overwhelming military strength gave him control of the situation by land. But this did not last long. In 1570 the Mediterranean front became active again when the Turk resumed the offensive; for the next two years, during and after Lepanto, Philip II was pinned down in the Mediterranean and could spare little for Alba in the Netherlands. The rebels attacked again, and from 1572 to 1576 Spain had to fight on two fronts, unable to win yet determined not to lose. Moreover even the military position of Alba had its Achilles heel: it was extremely vulnerable by sea, for Philip II had sent his magnificent army to the Netherlands without adequate naval cover. Effective resistance, therefore, had to come from outside, and it came in 1572. The pirates of the maritime provinces in the north of the Low Countries, operating from bases in England, had long been harrying Alba's lines of communication with Spain. Expelled from England, the 'Sea Beggars' seized the Zeeland town of Brill on 1 April 1572; from there they proceeded to capture other towns, including Flushing, which commanded the Scheldt, and within a few weeks occupied all Zeeland and Holland except Middelburg and Amsterdam. Yet even now it was hardly a popular revolt: it was a conquest, supported by a minority within the towns acting as a fifth-column; Calvinists replaced Catholics in the municipalities, often imposing themselves—and their religion—by violence and terror. The stirrings of resistance in the south, however, were too faint to undermine Alba's position there. For four more years the southern provinces remained obedient to Philip II, and the rebellion was confined to Holland and Zeeland, where it was protected from the Spanish infantry by the natural lines of defence provided by the great rivers, and, in the absence of Spanish naval power, was unmolested by sea. In spite of his last despairing efforts, Alba never overcame the rebellion in the north. Chronically short of money, and with the discipline of his unpaid *tercios* disintegrating before his eyes, he was no longer even a successful general. In October 1574, the 'decrepit old bird' as he called himself—he had another major campaign in front of him ten years later—was recalled and replaced by Requesens.

The appointment of Luis de Requesens was an admission by Philip II that Alba's methods had failed. The new governor brought a spirit of moderation to his office, as he had done to previous assignments, in Rome, Milan, and as counsellor of Don John in Granada and at Lepanto. Philip II knew his views and he respected them: Requesens advised a general pardon, the suppression of the Council of Troubles, and the abolition of the sales tax; he also wished to call the Estates General and through them negotiate with the rebels. But these terms were hardly more acceptable to the rebels in the north than those of Alba, for they contributed nothing to the basic debate between royal sovereignty and local autonomy; Philip II's methods may have changed, but his objectives remained the same—the restoration of his imprescriptible sovereign rights. Therefore, although Requesens published a general pardon (5 June 1574) and offered to abolish the sales tax in return for a subsidy, his approach made little impression in the south and was ignored in the north. Like Alba, he had to fall back on the army, at first with more success than the great general. True, the Spaniards lost Middelburg, their last stronghold in Zeeland in February 1574, but elsewhere the royal forces made some striking recoveries and steadily reduced the area of resistance. And in April

[22] H. Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique* (3rd edn., 7 vols., Brussels, 1909–32), iv. 21–4; see also *Epistolario del III Duque de Alba*, ii. 768–71, 780–83.

[23] See below, pp. 308–9.

the legendary Sancho Dávila inflicted a heavy defeat on an army of German mercenaries under Luis of Nassau at Mook, in the valley of the Meuse. But the victory was superficial and heralded a more profound defeat. The Spanish troops mutinied and occupied Antwerp, and Requesens was forced to negotiate with them in order to save the town from a sacking. This reacted unfavourably on his own policy of conciliation, and exposed a new weakness in Philip II's position. Once he could no longer rely on his own troops, he lost the ultimate sanction of his rule, and once he could no longer control them, he lost the confidence of the very subjects whom he claimed to be protecting.

Philip II's Army of Flanders consisted at its peak of 70,000 men drawn from Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and Spain. The elite units were Spanish and Italian, and one of the problems facing the king and his planners was to get these to Flanders quickly and securely. After 1568 the journey by sea was too hazardous. Only the land route remained. The first stage was from Spain to Lombardy via Genoa; the troops then travelled through Piedmont and Savoy, Franche Comte and Lorraine, countries which were possessions or allies of the king of Spain, and so into the Netherlands. This was the Spanish Road, a vital military corridor, which supplied the northern front and conditioned Spain's foreign policy for many decades to come.[24] To place an army on this distant front was a great feat of organisation. To control it was more difficult. The root of the trouble was Philip II's inability to pay his troops. The Netherlands were the largest and longest drain on his already strained resources. Lack of money for the war against the rebels constantly harassed his governors and immobilised their policies. Time after time projected campaigns had to be abandoned and the final blow delayed, simply because the money to finance them had not arrived. And penury finally struck at the heart of his power, in the very districts where he was obeyed. Mutinous troops drove off their officers, organised themselves with an unwonted discipline, and sought to occupy a wealthy town in order to get supplies and live off the inhabitants. Between 1572 and 1607 there were 46 mutinies, some of them major revolts lasting a year or more and involving thousands of men, including Spanish troops, whom Philip II regarded as 'the sinews and security' of his rule in the Netherlands. Their chief object was to secure payment of overdue wages, sometimes running into months or years, and normally they did not end until the claim was settled. While

[24] See Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567–1659* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 59–79, 290–2, for details on both logistics and mutinies. See also L. van der Essen, 'Croisade contre les hérétiques ou guerre contre des rebelles', *op. cit.*, p. 43, and the same author's *Alexandre Farnèse, prince de Parme, gouverneur général des Pays-Bas*, ii. 7–24.

the mutinies did not have a political aim, they had political consequences, halting campaigns, subverting Spanish authority, and diverting large amounts of money into pay settlements. They also taught a fatal lesson, that the Spanish authorities were incapable of protecting civilians. In 1575 Philip II went bankrupt for a second time, repudiating his debts, and regaining control of the revenues on which his debts had been secured. The bankers then refused to lend him money or to transfer it abroad. For the next two years the Netherlands were starved of supplies. Shortly after the death of Requesens in March 1576 the troops mutinied again. In a great 'Spanish Fury' they terrorised Antwerp, killed 8,000 civilians, and gravely impaired Philip II's authority in the Netherlands. Brussels itself, the seat of the royal government, was momentarily at risk.

In the absence of a governor general, the immediate representative of Philip II was the Council of State. Already divided between supporters and opponents of Spanish absolutism, it was now incapable of guaranteeing order in the capital. The gaps in royal authority so quickly exposed were as quickly exploited. As the government of Philip II was incapable of providing security, the provincial Estates undertook to provide it for themselves. The Estates of Brabant began to raise militia forces of their own, thus exercising power independently of the crown and its agents. On 4 September 1576 they arrested the 'royalist' members of the Council of State, reconstituted it without Spaniards, and induced it to invite representatives from Holland and Zeeland to meet at Ghent with those of the southern Estates. The resistance movement of these months was not popular in origin, nor even directed by local magistrates; its leaders were a group of nobles, including the heirs of Hornes and Egmont, who were avenging the executions of 1568 and seeking the restoration of their confiscated estates.[25] It was also predominantly Catholic. Would it be able to work with the rebels in the north? The answer to this question was reached with the assistance of the Spaniards themselves. On 4 November, after a brush with nationalist forces, the Spanish troops hurled themselves on Antwerp; the bloody massacre that followed was worse than any of its predecessors, and, by showing that no one's life or property were safe, helped to sink the differences between the Catholic south-west and the Protestant north-east. On 8 November the Pacification of Ghent was proclaimed, uniting the Netherlands against foreign absolutism with a programme of expelling the Spanish troops, calling the Estates General to settle the religious question with moderation, and restoring confiscated property. Here at last was a *general* rebellion. The Estates General were now exercising sovereignty and conducting day-to-day

[25] Griffiths, *William of Hornes*, p. 30.

administration. Yet the rebellion was not as strong as it looked. In the first place, there was still no solution to the religious problem. Calvinism was dominant in Holland and Zeeland, but Catholicism was the exclusive faith in the other provinces, and neither religion tolerated the other; soon there was a revolution within the revolution, as Calvinists revolted in Antwerp, Brussels, and Ghent, overthrew the Catholic magistrates and installed their own dictatorships. This raised a second issue. What reception should be accorded to the new governor general whom Philip II was planning to send? Should he be recognised or resisted? Those who feared that Calvinism was monopolising the revolution preferred to negotiate with the king and his representative, while those who distrusted the king looked to Orange and the partisans of outright resistance. Here was a chance for Philip, if only he could take it. Unfortunately he chose the wrong man and the wrong policy. If he was to exploit the political and religious divisions among the rebels, he would have to do so from a position of strength. For this he needed a statesman with a strong army. Instead he sent a soldier and deprived him of his troops.

Don John of Austria was reluctant to go to the Netherlands, the graveyard of so many careers. He was still dreaming of a kingdom for himself within the Spanish empire and the title of 'Highness' which his half-brother denied him. But he believed he might use his new command as a stepping-stone to greater things—the conquest of England, marriage with Mary Stuart, and the throne seized from Elizabeth.[26] Philip II humoured these romantic illusions, for he had a pathetic trust in the value of prestige and hoped that the man who beat the Turk would also cow the heretic, but in the Low Countries not in England. To restrain his ardour he gave him precise instructions, and these were conciliatory; saving royal authority and the Catholic religion, Don John was to go to almost any length to bring peace to the Low Countries, even to the point of removing the Spanish troops and dehispanising the administration; with his usual eye to detail, Philip even instructed him to avoid taking his mistresses from among the leading families of the country.[27] Don John, who arrived in the Netherlands in November 1576, was convinced that his real need was more troops and more money, but pacification was not inimical to his ideas, provided it split the enemy and enabled him to deploy the troops evacuated from the Low Countries in an invasion of England. By the short-lived Perpetual Edict (12 February 1577) he accepted most of the rebel demands, including the departure of the Spanish troops within twenty days. On these terms the Estates, without

[26] Törne, *Don Juan d'Autriche et les projets de conquête de l'Angleterre, 1568–1578*, i. 151–88; ii. 6–12, 46, 60–109.

[27] Gachard, *Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas*, iv. 450–64.

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While royal policy was floundering, torn between conciliation and force, the rebels had troubles of their own. The government of the Estates and the unity it represented were disrupted by the social and religious revolution which accompanied the political rebellion. The rift between the aristocratic and plebeian elements in the revolt, between the Duke of Aerschot and his associates on the one hand and William of Orange and the commons on the other, led to a parting of the ways. In their desire to counter the influence of Orange and his Calvinist and burgher allies, the southern nobility became estranged from the cause they had once led. In 1578 they began to withdraw their support from the government of the Estates General and to consolidate their control of the provincial Estates in the south, while a group of malcontent younger nobles organised a military movement of their own which attempted to pursue a course independent of king and Calvinists alike.[28] As this was essentially a Catholic reaction against the growing power of Calvinism, and an aristocratic reaction against the claims of the burghers, it presented an even greater opportunity to Philip II than the one he had missed in 1576. This time he made no mistake: he appointed as his governor general a

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superb statesman, and gave him the financial and military backing he had denied Don John.

Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, was one of the few of his foreign subjects whom Philip II trusted with high office. Educated at Alcalá with Don John, he had also served with him at Lepanto, and his dashing action at Gembloux helped to win Don John's solitary victory over the Estates. As a soldier he was outstanding. Few of his contemporaries commanded such confidence from their troops; his magnificent appearance and entourage, his courage, his insistence on discipline and refusal to condone excesses, his readiness to mix with his men, above all his success, gave him the personal prestige which no amount of royal support could supply. But he was more than a great general: his intellectual qualities raised him far above the rest of Philip II's commanders and made him the best possible choice for salvaging his sovereign's authority from the wreckage of insurrection. It must also be added that, in a period when receipts of American treasure were reaching unprecedented proportions, he possessed greater financial, and therefore military, power than his predecessors. And he was already briefed to take over from Don John, so there was no repetition of the fatal interregnum that had followed the death of Requesens. This time conciliation could be offered from a position of strength. On matters other than allegiance to the crown and the maintenance of Catholicism, Farnese was free to manoeuvre.

In April 1579 he reached an agreement with the malcontent nobles, who promised to return to their allegiance in exchange for the payment of their troops and a promise to withdraw the *tercios*. This formed the basis of the Treaty of Arras (17 May 1579) between Farnese and the Walloon Estates, which in January had already agreed in the Union of Arras to negotiate a reconciliation; the treaty reconciled Hainault and Artois to Philip II and maintained the exclusive position of Catholicism, in return for recognition of their autonomous privileges and the exclusion of foreigners from the government.[29] But the heart of the matter was the location of military power. Farnese agreed to withdraw the Spanish and foreign troops from those provinces adhering to the Treaty of Arras, but this left him free to employ them where resistance to Spain continued, as in Brabant and Flanders —another way of exploiting disunity and a further inducement to those who still held aloof. As he proceeded to reduce the centres of resistance in the south-west, Farnese won growing allegiance by his consummate diplomacy. Death sentences for treason were few and were never retrospective, being confined to the period after the Treaty of Arras; those, like William of Hornes (heir of the executed count), who defected to the camp of Orange or his ally, the Duke of Anjou, were executed as a deterrent to others. At the

[29] Van der Essen, *Alexandre Farnèse*, ii. 95–149, 196–225.

same time he rewarded those, like Philip of Egmont (son of Alba's victim), who gave their loyalty and service to the king, by showing them that their property and titles were secure under the crown and could be extended at the expense of the crown's enemies.[30] Thus from 1579 the royal government avoided the mistakes of 1568 when it had alienated a whole network of aristocratic families by executing their leading members. The new solution, similar to the one which was already successful in Spain itself, was to deprive the nobility of its feudal liberty by compensating it with economic and social privilege. Farnese's success in recovering the southern provinces for Spain, therefore, owed much to local conditions in the Netherlands—to aristocratic disquiet at the social implications of revolution. Caught between the crown and the militant revolutionaries, the nobles decided that their privileges could best be saved from attack by the latter through alliance with the former. His success also owed much to the persistence of Catholicism in the south even in areas where Calvinism was politically dominant; in Antwerp, for example, after seven years of Protestant rule, Catholics were still in a majority in 1585.[31] Nevertheless, the boundaries of separation between the northern and southern Netherlands were determined not only by religion and politics. Ultimately they were determined by military power: it was the military successes of Farnese, and their limits, that decided which part of the Netherlands returned to the Spanish allegiance.

In January 1579, shortly after the Union of Arras, the north-eastern provinces bound themselves in a counter-union, that of Utrecht, to maintain Protestantism and independence; and the Protestant towns of Flanders and Brabant soon associated themselves with this resistance. The only answer to the Union of Utrecht was military force, and this Farnese deployed in a double-barrelled offensive consisting of sieges and economic warfare; first he isolated each centre of resistance, then he starved it out. Having mopped up the last remnants of rebel outposts in the Walloon south-west, he then advanced north into Brabant and Flanders, systematically reducing Ypres, Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, and finally, on 17 August 1585, Antwerp.[32] His magnanimity in victory consolidated his gains; all the conquered towns received liberal terms, and Protestants were given periods of grace to turn Catholic or leave. But with the occupation of Brabant and Flanders, Spanish power reached its limit. Protected by their great rivers and their incomparable sea power, the north-eastern provinces, whose core was Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht, remained impregnable. There, although Philip II might

[30] Griffiths, *William of Hornes*, pp. 78–80.

[31] Smit, 'The present position of studies regarding the Revolt of the Netherlands', in J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossmann, *Britain and the Netherlands* (London, 1960), p. 25.

[32] Van der Essen, *Alexandre Farnèse*, iii. 120–49; iv. 134–48.

maintain the legal fiction that he was reducing rebel subjects, in fact he was fighting a losing war with an independent power. And the war his enemies chose to fight was a maritime one.

3. The Battle of the Atlantic

The economic value of the Netherlands to Spain had been a concomitant of their political subordination, as has been seen. But what were they worth once Spanish sovereignty was challenged? The Duke of Alba had professed to be indifferent to economic considerations: 'It is far better to preserve by war for God and the king a kingdom that is impoverished and even ruined than, without war, preserve it entire for the benefit of the devil and his disciples, the heretics.'[33] Philip II was not so insensitive. He ordered Alba to extend 'great privileges and liberties to foreign merchants in order to increase trade', and to maintain thirty ships to guard commercial communications in the Channel.[34] For some years Spain preserved the Netherlands without impoverishing them and without reducing them to the ruin threatened by the Duke of Alba and depicted by later historians, who have tended to exaggerate and pre-date the economic disasters of the time.[35] Local industry survived the fiscal measures of Alba and the blockade of the Scheldt by the rebels and their allies from 1568. The years 1570–80 were ones of reasonable prosperity for the production of linen fabrics at Oudenard, and crisis did not begin before 1580 when the town was badly damaged by the royal army. The textile production of Hondschoote was hardly affected by the action of the rebels or the policy of Alba; production and export were maintained in some quantity from 1562 to 1570, fell a little from 1568 to 1575, but rose again after the 'general pardon' of 1574, and reached a record figure in 1578, falling from 1579; in 1580 the town was badly pillaged by royal troops, and suffered further destruction at the hands of the Duke of Anjou's army in 1582. The incidence of emigration tells the same story: the movement from the south to the north was not really significant in the 1560's and 1570's; it only reached substantial proportions between 1585 and 1590, naturally beginning rather later than the economic crisis; in this case the south's losses were the north's gains—the revival of the textile industry in Leyden, for example, owed something to the arrival of immigrants from the south.[36] The economic crisis in the Low Countries under

[33] Pirenne, *op. cit.*, iv. 7.
[34] Secret Instructions, in Verheyden, *op. cit.*, 508.
[35] See the traditional account by Pirenne, *op. cit.*, iii. 218; iv. 411–25, and the comments of C. Verlinden, 'En Flandres sous Philippe II: durée de la crise économique', *Annales*, i. (1952), 21–30.
[36] Verlinden, 'En Flandres sous Philippe II', *op. cit.*, pp. 24–26, 27–28.

Philip II, therefore, was of much shorter duration than is usually supposed, and ought to be dated mainly between 1580 and 1590. Its causes were not the closure of the Scheldt, nor the exaction of new taxes, nor the immigrations. The real causes are to be sought in the operations of reconquest of the southern provinces undertaken from 1579. The success of Farnese was gained at a price; the devastation wrought by his army and his methods of cutting off supplies adversely affected the economy of the country, while the restoration of Spanish rule resulted in the flight of many Protestants. But the subsequent crisis was relatively brief, and this accounts for the rapid recovery of the country in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Antwerp, of course, was more exposed to the impact of war, for its prosperity depended largely on the maintenance of maritime communications. But allowing for this, its progress and decline followed roughly the same pattern. Its mid-century prosperity gave way to years of difficulty but not disaster, between 1568 and 1573 when collaboration between the Dutch rebels and English and French pirates closed the Scheldt to navigation, at a time when the fiscal policy of the Duke of Alba was already making trade more expensive. But Antwerp had considerable powers of resistance, even to the excesses committed by mutinous troops.[37] After the victory of Dávila at Mook in 1574, 4,000 unpaid troops took over Antwerp for six weeks, threatening and negotiating in turn, and only withdrew when they were paid. During this period no exchange business was conducted and many merchants quit the town. But by the beginning of 1575 business had picked up again, though it was soon struck by further disasters. The suspension of payments by Philip II in September 1575 paralysed credit on the Antwerp exchange and halted business. This was followed by the terrible sack of the town in November 1576, when many commercial buildings and stocks of merchandise were burnt and the citizens once again had to buy off the royal troops. The English had already sought another market for their textiles in Hamburg; now many other businessmen left and took their trade elsewhere. But these were mainly foreigners; most of the Spanish and Portuguese merchants remained and gradually reorganised their affairs. Then in the summer of 1577 Antwerp surrendered to William of Orange, and the Estates General proclaimed its sovereignty there. Again, some Spanish merchants remained and continued to trade with Spain via Holland and Zeeland. But gradually political and religious difficulties forced many of them to emigrate to Cologne, and after this exodus the economic life of Antwerp declined, especially from 1578; in 1582 only three Spanish firms remained, while on the eve of the capture of the town by Farnese in 1585 there were less than ten merchants left altogether. Antwerp was now under

[37] Vázquez de Prada, *Lettres marchandes d'Anvers*, pp. 27–34.

Spanish domination. When Farnese entered most of the Spanish merchants returned; exchange and commercial business revived again, especially dealings with the government. But Protestant merchants left and took their business to Amsterdam and Middelburg, while normal trade was broken by the Anglo-Dutch blockade of the Scheldt. From now on Antwerp had to trade with the outside world via Dutch ports, especially Amsterdam, paying transit dues, losing its international status, and forfeiting its position of entrepôt of spices and precious metals. In this period maritime warfare made direct commerce with Spain extremely hazardous, and more was done from Hamburg, Nantes, and Rouen, than from the Netherlands themselves.

Communications between Spain and the Netherlands had long been under attack by the rebels and their maritime allies. The difficulties of distance and transport operated against Spain from the very beginning. Moreover, the revolt of the Netherlands was an international question, for Spain's possession of a base in the north naturally aroused the susceptibilities of England and France, while her difficulties there enabled them to strike at the weak point in her defences. Direct intervention would have caused war, but France and England could strike at Spain through the freebooting operations of their subjects, who could be officially disavowed. Piracy became the normal form of cold-war, a source of great profit to the maritime populations of France, England, and Holland, and a glaring exposure of Spain's weakness in northern waters. The pressure became more relentless when the wars of religion began in France. From 1562 Huguenots and their English allies, operating from privateering bases in Le Havre and the Isle of Wight and with licences obtained from the French governor of Le Havre, attacked not only the ships of their French enemies but, much more frequently, Spanish and Flemish vessels plying between Spain and the Netherlands.[38] To the protests of Philip II's ambassador, De Quadra, Elizabeth replied that she had no legal power over Le Havre, but even had she been sincere in her disavowal of piracy she could not have restrained her subjects, least of all men like Thomas Cobham and Martin Frobisher who regarded all Spanish ships as legitimate prey. In July 1563 Granvelle advised Philip that the most effective reply was not diplomatic protest or negotiation, but retaliation in kind. But even if the king had possessed the means to do this, he did not wish to risk alienating England, and he could not afford protective convoys from Spain to the Low Countries. Even Philip II's patience, however, had its limits. Exasperated by the piracies committed during the first French war of religion, and at the attack in 1564 on two vessels sailing from the Netherlands when English pirates killed the crews and robbed to the extent

[38] M. Fernández Alvarez, 'Orígenes de la rivalidad naval hispano–inglesa en el siglo XVI', *Revista de Indias*, viii. (1947), 311–69.

of 40,000 ducats, he ordered a general embargo on English ships in Spanish ports, confiscated goods of 30 vessels, and detained many English seamen. So with the arrival in London of a new Spanish ambassador, Guzmán de Silva, in July 1564, the main question at issue was piracy and a solution to the consequent interruption of trade between the Netherlands and England. But this was purely diplomatic pressure, and Philip seems to have been taken in by the assurances of Elizabeth, at least to the extent of not retaliating or arming his vessels, though Spanish merchants were asking him to do so. Meanwhile piracy continued. Philip II's prolonged mistake in these years was to rely on diplomacy instead of taking strong defensive measures. Obsessed by the fear of a Franco-Scottish pincer movement on England and the formation of a new block of enemies in the north, he was over-sensitive to English feelings and too anxious to avoid offending Elizabeth. He received his reward in 1568.

The massive movement of Spanish troops from Italy to the Netherlands in 1567 deeply disturbed France and England. Here was Spain poised with incomparable force in the heart of northern Europe. Where would the Duke of Alba lead this army once it had crushed the rebels? Had it really come simply to restore order, or was this a mask and were the Netherlands a base for a Catholic crusade? On every possible occasion Philip II repeated that this was purely a political matter within his own states, and sought to reduce the religious issues with the argument that he was merely exercising sovereign rights over his own subjects. But he did not allay French suspicions, much less those of England. The operation was too provocative to be ignored and too exposed not to be attacked. And the simplest method of attacking it was to cut its maritime communications with Spain. In December 1569 a squadron of Biscayan vessels carrying money for the pay of the Duke of Alba's troops sought refuge from Huguenot raiders in English ports. On Cecil's advice, and with a mixture of political and economic motives, Elizabeth seized the cargo.[39] Theoretically the money still belonged to the Genoese bankers who had contracted with Philip II to pay his representatives in the Netherlands, and Elizabeth offered to indemnify the bankers. But more important than the legal aspects of the case were the economic and strategic consequences. The Duke of Alba retaliated by seizing the goods of English subjects in the Low Countries, while in Spain itself English fleets were detained in Biscay and Andalucía. Elizabeth replied with a general embargo on Spanish and Netherlands goods in England. From these mutual seizures, England gained much more than Spain, both in money and in property, so Elizabeth had less inducement than Alba to reach an agreement. Her action

[39] Conyers Read, 'Queen Elizabeth's seizure of the Duke of Alba's pay ships', *Journal of Modern History*, v. (1933), 443–64.

also gave unmistakable notice to Spain that the Channel route to the Netherlands could be closed at her discretion. In fact it was closed to Spanish shipping for more than eighteen months; English seamen, sheltering under the policy of their government, unleashed a new campaign against Spanish vessels in combination with a vicious offensive from the Huguenot seamen of La Rochelle who sold most of their booty in England, and with the mounting assault of the Dutch raiders who operated from English bases. For Spain the crisis of 1568–70 was the worst for many years, and the economic consequences were felt in the complete disorganisation of her maritime communications with the Netherlands. Piracy without remission, embittered on the English side by the treatment of Hawkins at San Juan de Ulúa, cut the great imperial route of Spanish money for the Low Countries and crippled the trade of Spanish merchants. This was the first serious defeat for Spain in the battle of the Atlantic.

The Duke of Alba was not completely insensitive to commercial interests, and he was also aware of the danger to his communications. So he prudently avoided a complete rupture with England, though the situation was inflammable. The maritime conflict in the Atlantic and the Caribbean, the meddling of the Spanish ambassador, D'Espés, in Elizabeth's difficulties with Mary Stuart and the northern rebels, the papal bull of excommunication of 1570, all increased the tension of these years. Even the cautious Philip almost reached the point of risking a military trial of strength with England.[40] But Alba kept his head. Arguing shortage of money, lack of opportunity in England, and the difficulty of the European situation, he restrained his sovereign. And he was right: there was no alternative but to negotiate. The Low Countries were already eating up money and troops; in 1569, with the outbreak of the war of Granada, Philip had a second rebellion on his hands and his Mediterranean front to consider. To attempt more in these circumstances would have been suicidal. By March 1573 Alba's negotiations bore fruit in the Convention of Nimwegen which included mutual agreement on the property seizures, and provided for the restoration of trade between England and the Low Countries for a period of two years.[41]

By this time, however, the Sea Beggars had captured Brill and spread revolution in Holland and Zeeland. Possession of Flushing enabled them to command the Scheldt, and from 1572 a new blockade of Antwerp began and a new stage in the maritime war. The Spaniards could not even hold Middelburg, which was taken by the rebels in February 1574. From then on the rebels were in a position to control all navigation with Spain, raiding the shipping that tried to get through, selling their prizes, and making trade themselves at the expense of Antwerp. Spain's lack of sea power in the north

[40] See above, pp. 280–81.

[41] Conyers Read, *Walsingham*, i. 308.

had never been more ruthlessly exposed. Searching wildly for the answer to their predicament, Philip II's counsellors advised an economic counter-blockade as the only effective form of fighting the rebels: by stopping their trade with Spain it was thought they would be cut off from their main source of subsistence.[42] But the advice was unreal. It was impossible to prohibit the rebels from trading with Spain, because Spain could not subsist without the goods and services the rebels provided. Inevitably, one of these was grain; this they bought cheaply every summer in Baltic ports (for there was a surplus in Poland and few competitors), stored in their warehouses during the winter, and sold in the Iberian peninsula the following spring. In exchange they procured precious bullion. Thus the Netherlands were doubly voracious of American treasure: as fast as Spain poured money into their defence, the rebels earned some of what remained by trading with Spain. Philip II could not escape from this dilemma, for he lacked the shipping to supply his own needs, and what he had could not break the Dutch stranglehold on his northern communications. For both objects, to supplement his merchant marine and fight Dutch sea power, he needed additional fleets. In his desperation he even turned to Sweden. From the Baltic he sought ships and naval stores, and this was the purpose of the strange mission of Francisco de Eraso to John III of Sweden in 1578—to sound the possibility of engaging a Swedish fleet to reduce the Netherlands rebels and strike their international accomplices.[43] Nothing came of this approach and eventually Philip II was forced to admit that a policy of blockade against the Low Countries—and against England—was beyond the means of Spain, for she had neither the economic power, nor the seamen, nor the ships necessary for such drastic measures. In commerce the Dutch had more to fear from their own leaders than from Philip II. From 1577, when Orange took Antwerp, the authorities there tried to prohibit trade with Spain, and in 1582 the Estates General renewed the prohibition on the export of grain to the peninsula. But political objectives foundered on economic realities, as Philip II had already learnt. The maritime populations of Holland and Zeeland lived almost exclusively from commerce and shipping, and they preferred to profit from their enemies by trade as well as fight them by privateering.

4. Warnings From England

The gap in Spain's imperial defences opened by the revolt of the Netherlands was soon widened, as the maritime war spread into the Atlantic and

[42] Vázquez de Prada, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–60; Braudel, *La Méditerranée*, p. 490; see also above, p. 154.

[43] F. Ruiz Martín, 'La etapa marítima de las guerras de religión, Bloqueos y contra-bloqueos', *Estudios de Historia Moderna*, iii. (1954), 195–214.

beyond. Here the prize at stake was even more valuable than Spain's dominion and trade in northern Europe. It was her greatest and wealthiest overseas possession—her empire in America. And here, in Philip II's reign, the supreme threat to security came not from the French, whose sea power was unequal to Spain's, nor yet from the Dutch, whose greatest assault was still to come, but from the English. Philip II's policy towards England was conditioned primarily by political and economic considerations and not by the objectives of the Counter-Reformation.[44] Furthermore, it was focused essentially on English action in the two parts of his empire where his defences could be pierced—the Netherlands and America. In both cases his policy was animated by national, not religious, objectives. He himself, of course, did not necessarily distinguish between the two, and seems to have believed that Spain's interests were also those of Catholicism. Nevertheless, there was a distinction. In the interests of power, and its defence, he was ultimately prepared to go to war; in the interests of religion he preferred other means.

Religious hostility between Spain and England went deep on both sides, but, in spite of Cardinal Quiroga in Spain and of Sir Francis Walsingham in England, it was a conflict of ideas, not of arms, and it embittered relations but did not break them. Superficially it might have seemed that Philip II possessed a potential fifth-column among English Catholics, but he himself understood that the situation was not what it appeared to be. In the early 1560's, before the English Catholic population began to decline, he refrained from giving it a political lead, for that might have served the interests of Mary Queen of Scots and produced a Guise empire in the north. Later, he seems to have appreciated that English émigrés did not necessarily speak for their co-religionists at home, and that they exaggerated the strength of Catholic opposition to Elizabeth. Therefore, although he allowed his ambassadors in London considerable latitude in intriguing with any opposition that existed, this was essentially a pressure device of the kind used by most rulers, including Elizabeth, to exploit the weaknesses of their rivals, and did not commit him to armed intervention. The actual assistance English Catholics received from Philip II was of a different kind. The English seminary at Douai in the Netherlands was founded with his permission and assistance for the purpose of training priests for the English mission. By the close of the sixteenth century there were also seminaries at Valladolid, Lisbon, Madrid, and Seville, all subsidised by the Spanish crown. Beyond this Philip II was not prepared to go.[45]

[44] See above, pp. 280–84.

[45] See J. H. Pollen, S.J., *The English Catholics in the reign of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1920); A. O. Meyer, *England and the Catholic Church under Elizabeth* (London, 1916); P. Hughes, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation* (London, 1942).

Political rivalry and economic warfare, however, were another matter. Spain's weakness in the Netherlands gave Elizabeth an opportunity far greater than anything Philip possessed in England. William of Orange may have received some financial assistance from Elizabeth as early as 1568, and in 1572 to counteract French influence she allowed companies of English volunteers to cross the Channel. For the moment, however, Philip was saved from direct intervention by England because England feared intervention by France; if Spain were forced to quit the Netherlands and the subsequent vacuum were filled by France, the strategic implications for England would be even more alarming. Philip II's sovereignty in the Low Countries, therefore, had little to fear from Elizabeth; throughout the 1570's her primary objective was to force him to withdraw his army, and her means were diplomacy, traffic with the rebels, and the attack on his communications which she had already initiated.[46] But it was obvious to Philip II that England was in a position to do more than this if necessary and that the queen was reserving her freedom of action. Meanwhile, in America English policy was less inhibited.

The colonial monopoly claimed by Spain had already been disputed by her rivals.[47] The legal justification for the monopoly—the papal bull of demarcation of 1493 granting lands towards the west and the south to the crown of Spain—was not accepted by other nations, nor could the Treaty of Tordesillas of 1494 between Spain and Portugal ratifying the agreed demarcation have any legal validity for third parties. Neither France nor England considered themselves bound by it. In 1534 Francis I of France formally informed the Spanish ambassador in Paris that he did not renounce his rights in America. For Elizabeth and her government the fact that the grant of monopoly had been made by the pope was only another reason why it should be rejected, and from at least 1561 they argued that occupation must be effective to constitute possession. As neither side would retreat from its claims, international treaties were usually silent about America. At least as early as the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis of 1559 between Spain and France, however, an oral agreement seems to have set up the famous 'lines of amity'—the meridian of the Canaries and the Tropic of Cancer—beyond which might would make right and ships sailed at their own peril, and from which evolved the principle of 'no peace beyond the line'.[48] But beneath the legal and diplomatic arguments the basic question was one of power.

[46] See R. B. Wernham, 'English Policy and the Revolt of the Netherlands', in Bromley and Kossmann, *Britain and the Netherlands*, 29–40.

[47] Modern research on the challenge to the Spanish Indies is seen to best advantage in K. R. Andrews, *The Spanish Caribbean. Trade and Plunder 1530–1630* (New Haven, 1978).

[48] F. G. Davenport, *European Treaties bearing on the history of the United States and its Dependencies* (Washington, 1917), pp. 219–21.

Spain was in the New World by right of conquest and settlement, and by virtue of her superior power; against this, other nations would have to fight their way in. The French attempted to do so by piracy on the high seas and colonisation in North America. Spain replied by tightening her maritime defences and sending an expedition to wipe out the short-lived Huguenot settlement in Florida in 1565. English enterprise began more modestly, but was more persistent.

Before England began to attack the Spanish colonial monopoly by piracy and privateering, her merchants and seamen made various attempts to share in it by peaceful means. These had already begun before the reign of Elizabeth, but from the early 1560's they acquired a new urgency and greater organisation, and the search for markets and metals now received the encouragement of the state itself. The example of French piracy had shown that Spain's imperial defences were not impregnable, and it was known that the Spanish West Indies were short of vital commodities—especially labour. Against this background, John Hawkins made his first slaving expedition to the Caribbean in 1562–63, selling in Hispaniola negroes he had bought in West Africa. He was breaking the Spanish law on two accounts: no foreigner might go to the Indies without licence, and no goods might be sold there unless they had been registered at Seville. The licence he procured from a local official—caught, as colonial officials usually were, between the policy of the crown and the pressure of the settlers—allowing him trading facilitities 'so far as I am authorised and by law may so do' was worthless, for the formula was not recognised in colonial law.[49] In Spain the authorities confiscated those of Hawkins' returns which he had sent experimentally to Seville for declaration, and dispatched orders to the West Indies forbidding the colonists to trade with him. But in spite of the confiscations the profits of the expedition were sufficient to justify another in 1564–65, and this was made with the queen's sanction, with the participation of one of her ships, and with the help of money invested by her ministers, so that Hawkins could truthfully say to Spanish officials on the mainland of South America that he had sailed 'by order of Elizabeth, Queen of England, whose fleet this is'.[50] Again, in view of the needs of the settlers the local officials could not apply the legal prohibitions against trading with foreigners, but even so Hawkins had to extort 'licences' by threatening to use force. By this time the Spanish authorities realised that Hawkins was making a real—though small—break in their monopoly, and doing so with the support of powerful interests in the English government. As diplomatic complaints

[49] I. A. Wright, ed., *Spanish Documents concerning English voyages to the Caribbean, 1527–1568* (London, Hakluyt Society, 1929), p. 60.
[50] *Ibid.*, pp. 82–3.

were useless, the only effective answer Spain could make was force greater than that which Hawkins himself threatened to use—if the transgressor could be caught.

In 1567 Hawkins prepared his third expedition, another state undertaking, with government supervision and the queen's participation. He attempted to lay a false trail in advance, and the Spanish ambassador in London was told that the fleet was destined for the African coast and had no intention of intruding in Spain's colonies. In fact it was another slaving expedition to the Spanish Main. The governor of Venezuela refused Hawkins permission to trade, and while the prohibition was hardly more effective than previous ones it was difficult to resist it peacefully. At Río de la Hacha Francis Drake, whose second voyage to the Caribbean this was, opened fire on the Treasurer's House and captured a caravel, while Hawkins himself, whose nature was less tempestuous than that of his subordinate, had to force trade upon the settlement against the will of the local authorities. On his way home, however, he put in at San Juan de Ulúa in New Spain for repairs; there in September 1568 he was trapped by the annual Spanish fleet arriving with the new viceroy of Mexico, Martín Enríquez. The English version of what followed alleged Spanish treachery, and the Spanish documents themselves seem to confirm it; from a fortified sand-bank Hawkins commanded the entrance to the harbour, and he allowed the Spanish fleet to enter in return for a promise that he might retain his position. Having been lulled into a false sense of security, he was then viciously attacked, his flotilla was shattered, and he and Drake managed to escape with only two vessels.[51] Hawkins, of course, had not been in a position to make conditions with a superior force, and in Spanish eyes he was a corsair with no rights. In any case he had been told by Guzmán de Silva, the Spanish ambassador in London, what to expect if he were caught in the Indies, and Drake's aggressive conduct at Río de la Hacha belied the peaceful nature of the expedition.

The trading voyages of Hawkins were only a pin-prick in the vast economic structure between Spain and the Indies, and the returns he gained were insignificant compared with the wealth which flowed to Seville.[52] But he was a danger to the Spanish monopoly and the notion that he should earn a licence by patrolling the Caribbean for Spain, if it was ever seriously intended by Elizabeth and Hawkins, could hardly be taken seriously by Philip II. There had never been any possibility that Spain would concede a

[51] *Ibid.*, pp. 128–62; see also J. A. Williamson, *Hawkins of Plymouth* (London, 1949); and for a Spanish view, A. Rumeu de Armas, *Viajes de John Hawkins a América* (Seville, 1947).
[52] See above, pp. 171–72, and references to Chaunu there.

legal English trade in America. Now the English themselves understood the position, and it was in this sense that the incident at San Juan de Ulúa marked a turning point in Anglo-Spanish relations. It coincided with that tension in Europe from 1568 which drove Spain and England further apart and unleashed a concerted Protestant attack on Spanish shipping and communications. And in the Indies, what England could not gain by trade she now tried to take by force. From 1571 Drake began his campaign of piracy in the Caribbean, capturing booty and prisoners in an unlimited attack which extended to the West Indies the maritime assault already countenanced by the English government in home waters. Legally Drake was a pirate—there was no official war and he himself had no commission—but indirectly he was an agent of the queen's policy. In 1572 he went in search of treasure, not at sea, but on land, at the key point of the silver route from Peru on the Isthmus of Panama. There the Spaniards only held Panama itself on the Pacific coast and Nombre de Dios on the Caribbean, with a wayside station between them; and security in the interior was weakened by the hostility of a tribe of *cimarrones*, runaway negro slaves, with whom foreign raiders could league to strike at the common enemy. Drake first attacked Nombre de Dios, but failed to capture any treasure; six months later he tried to ambush the mule trains, and again he failed; the third attempt, another ambush, was successful, and Drake got back to Plymouth with a vast load of precious metals. He had also revealed a weak link in the process by which treasure was relayed to Spain. If Englishmen could hold the Isthmus and penetrate the Pacific, the ships that brought the treasure from Peru could be attacked and plundered. John Oxenham, who had been with Drake in 1572–73, tried to do precisely this in 1576 as a private venture, crossing the Isthmus by river to the Pacific coast, introducing an element of religious warfare by mocking Catholic beliefs and practices on the way, and finally intercepting some treasure ships. The Spanish authorities, however, replied energetically; the English were routed, the treasure was recaptured, and Oxenham, having been tried by the Inquisition, was hanged in Lima.[53]

This ended attempts to reach the heart of the Spanish empire by striking across the Isthmus of Panama. But there was another way into the Pacific, via the Straits of Magellan, and Drake took it when he circumnavigated the world between 1577 and 1580. As one gap in Spain's imperial defences was closed, another was prised open. The objective of Drake's latest expedition was to discover, not new lands, but new trades, and it was directed to the Moluccas and perhaps China; but to this official programme was added Drake's own scheme of attacking Spanish commerce on the west coast of

[53] I. A. Wright, *Documents concerning English Voyages to the Spanish Main, 1579–1580* (London, Hakluyt Society, 1932), pp. 108–234.

America.[54] The authorities in the empire were not warned in time of this expedition and there was no general alert. Once he had navigated the Straits of Magellan and was making his way up the Pacific coast his presence was known in Panama, but Spanish defences were weak on this coast, and the distances were so vast that it was difficult to keep track of his movements. Consequently he raided the Peruvian coast with impunity and in March 1579 captured a valuable cargo of silver, after which he drew away northwards and then westwards. When he returned to England he was received with national acclaim, and, no longer caring what Philip II thought, the queen knighted him.

The exploits of Drake stirred the patriotism and imagination of Englishmen, but were naturally less impressive to Spaniards. Piracy was a sign of weakness, not of strength. The actions of the English sea-dogs were a tribute to the superior power of Spain, who actually possessed the colonies that England could only raid. These colonies were not adequately defended, it is true. Since neither sovereignty nor revenue were endangered by the sacking of minor towns and the seizure of coastal shipping, Spain spared little effort for the protection of America, and resistance in the Caribbean was slight until about 1586.[55] The inhabitants were left mainly to provide for their own defence with local militia forces and without sufficient arms or artillery; there were few important forts or garrisons in American ports before 1585. The use of fleets against sea raiders was hardly more advanced than military defences, though the English menace led to some improvement. After long debate the crown decided that the convoy warships of the trade fleets, which patrolled against corsairs while awaiting the return of their merchantmen, were insufficient, and by 1582 permanent patrols of the Caribbean coasts were provided and operated with growing efficiency against lesser corsairs, so that only strong squadrons had much chance of success.[56] But the Chilean and Peruvian coasts were still highly vulnerable, as Drake demonstrated in 1579.

The weakness of imperial defences, however, was the result of factors far more powerful than lack of organisation or of resources.[57] Spain had experience of conditions in America, and knew what was possible there. The distances involved were too vast to be adequately embraced by any defence system. A coastguard fleet would have been of little use on the great expanse of the Pacific coast. Fleets could escort treasure convoys, as the flotilla escorted

[54] H. R. Wagner, *Sir Francis Drake's Voyage round the World. Its Aims and Achievements* (San Francisco, 1926), pp. 15–27.

[55] R. D. Hussey, 'Spanish reaction to foreign aggression in the Caribbean to about 1680', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, ix. (1929), 286–302.

[56] See above, pp. 167–68, and references to Chaunu there.

[57] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, iii. 267–68.

the annual convoy from Callao to Panama, and they could provide local defence, as the Armada of Tierra Firme protected Cartagena and other points along the Spanish Main. But further than this it was impossible to plan. It was beyond the means of any power to patrol the whole of the South American coast-line from the Antilles to the Straits of Magellan and from there to Panama. It was only possible to provide guards for the fleets, especially on the Atlantic crossing, and it was a piece of calculated and successful planning for Spain to concentrate her efforts and resources here, even at the expense of general imperial defence. The same factors, of course, made Drake's exploits less impressive. His penetration of the Pacific was a great feat of navigation rather than of strategy. It was not difficult to appear at virtually any point in the Spanish empire, as long as it was merely a question of navigating and looting. But it was less easy to found a colony or capture a treasure fleet, for colonies had to be sustained and the fleets were adequately guarded. Drake's operations, therefore, annoyed Philip II, but they did not deprive him of a single colony or enable England to gain any. Even the prizes taken were minute compared with the treasure which continued to reach Spain and the trade which she still controlled.[58]

Nevertheless, Drake was still at large, and it was difficult to know where he would strike next. The feeling of insecurity which filled Spanish merchants and shippers was more important than the actual losses they sustained, for it made them hesitate to invest further in the Indies trade and caused them to lose confidence in the ability of their own government to protect them. Moreover, it was becoming increasingly obvious to Philip II that, by probing his defences and exploiting his weaknesses, Elizabeth was waging war on him without actually declaring it, and that the initiative was in her hands. But what could he do? Diplomacy was useless; the Low Countries were exposed to foreign intervention; and it was almost impossible to catch pirates once they had left their base, for they were lost to view in the immense spaces which enveloped his empire. Was there any other solution? If the rebels in the Low Countries were shielded by his enemies, could he isolate them from external help? Above all, if his colonies were too vast to be defended in America, could they be defended in Europe? Could he eliminate the bases of the enemy in England itself? Before he could answer these questions Philip II had another enterprise to complete, and Spanish policy had a further process of re-orientation to undergo. Gradually after Lepanto, and more urgently from 1578, when truces with the Turk became regular, he began to withdraw from the war in the Mediterranean and to reduce

[58] See above, pp. 172–73; see also Wagner, *op. cit.*, pp. 194–212, who describes Drake as a 'captain of industry' rather than an explorer or statesman.

his commitments there to the minimum of defence.[59] From 1579 he initiated a new policy in the Netherlands, and Farnese began to win back some of the ground which had been lost since 1566. Philip II was now turning Spain unreservedly from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, in order to face the greatest danger which threatened him and to prepare for the day of reckoning with his enemies in the north. The first stage in this change of direction was the annexation of Portugal.

[59] See above, pp. 248–50.

CHAPTER X

WAR AND RECESSION

1. The Annexation of Portugal

In 1578 King Sebastian of Portugal led a suicidal expedition to Morocco with the object of conquering and converting its Moors. The Portuguese army, badly supplied, exhausted by heat and marches, and ineptly commanded by the irresponsible king, was overwhelmed at the battle of Alcazar-Kebir on 4 August, and Sebastian himself was killed. He left no direct heir. The next five years were critical ones for Portugal, and for Spain. Spanish policy had already been pulled more insistently towards the Atlantic, first by the revolt of the Netherlands and then by the hostility of England. Now, with Portugal leaderless and drifting, Philip II could vindicate his own claims to her throne; if he were successful he would be able not only to close a vulnerable sector of his peninsular defences but also to increase his power in the Atlantic by acquiring a new kingdom, another empire, a larger seaboard, and an additional fleet. He accepted the challenge, and the struggle for supremacy in the Atlantic was now joined as he turned Spain ponderously towards the ocean and the north. At the same time his financial position began to improve, after the state bankruptcy of 1575; the influx of American treasure grew to unprecedented proportions in the 1580's and augmented the Spanish war potential. In these circumstances Spain passed from defence to attack, from the caution characteristic of the first half of Philip II's reign to the imperialism of its last two decades. But first Philip had to prepare his domestic front.

Since 1573 the most influential voice in the administration had been that of the secretary of state, Antonio Pérez, the new leader of the old 'peace' faction. But Perez's influence was not decisive. During the governorship of Don John in the Netherlands the secretary and his associates, the Marquis of los Vélez and Cardinal Quiroga, advocated a settlement with the rebels and an invasion of England. The advice was premature; the king wanted peace in the Low Countries, but he was not yet ready for war with England. But Philip II did not strike down people who disagreed with his policy; he simply ignored them. Pérez's transgression went much deeper. For reasons which are still obscure, with the intention perhaps of making himself indispensable to both Philip II and Don John, he played upon the

already tense relations between the king and his half-brother. Philip knew that Don John had ambitions in England; he also learnt that from the Low Countries he was negotiating with the pope and the Catholic party in France in order to gain allies for a cross-Channel invasion.[1] But Don John's policy, though independent, was not subversive. It was Pérez who made it appear more dangerous than it was and who produced a scapegoat, Juan de Escobedo, Don John's secretary, a man ambitious for himself as well as for his master. Corresponding secretly with the governor and his secretary, Pérez showed the king the minutes of his dispatches and the confidential letters he received in return; he thus encouraged Don John and at the same time fed Philip's suspicion of his half-brother. But in 1578 Escobedo arrived at court to represent the views and needs of Don John before the king. Pérez now ran the risk of having his intrigues and his disclosure of state secrets exposed. So he struck first; blaming Don John's ambitions on Escobedo, he incited the king against him and ended by persuading Philip that he must be eliminated.[2] The king seems to have consented to the proposal, believing as usual that he had emergency powers of execution without trial. Pérez first tried to get rid of his rival by poison, and when this failed he had him run through by hired assassins in the streets of Madrid on 31 March 1578.

The matter, of course, could not rest there. In spite of his precautions, Pérez had not been able to cover his tracks completely; soon public rumour was attributing the crime to him, and Escobedo's family were demanding justice. Mateo Vázquez, Pérez's rival in the secretariat, took note of the accusations and began to denounce him to the king. Philip, tortured now in his own conscience, moved uneasily between two courses of action. He was careful not to admit that the assassination took place with his consent, but at the same time he refrained from pursuing Pérez, partly because of his own feeling of guilt, partly because of what Pérez could reveal. But when Don John died and his papers arrived in Spain, Philip was convinced that his half-brother had been innocent and that Pérez had deceived him. He was also becoming increasingly irritated by the political association between Pérez and the Princess of Eboli, and suspected that there was a leakage of state information. The king's attitude now changed. By this time his greatest political problem was the Portuguese succession. The negotiations for this were in the hands of Pérez himself, an official whom he could no longer trust and whose record in the handling of state secrets was suspect. He decided to remove him. But first he must assemble a new administration. Alba was still in disgrace; Los Vélez had recently died, also out of favour; Quiroga was not in complete agreement with the king's

[1] Marañón, *Antonio Pérez*, i. 226–51. [2] *Ibid.*, i. 253–73, 345–72.

Portuguese policy. So Philip looked for men who were not closely associated with his previous advisers. His first choice was Cardinal Granvelle.

Granvelle was a hard and skilful diplomatist who had begun his career as secretary of Charles V by specialising in northern affairs; since his removal from the Low Countries in the 1560's, however, he had served the crown in Italy, first in negotiating the Holy League, then as viceroy of Naples from 1571 to 1575, and finally as counsellor of the Spanish embassy in Rome.[3] In every office he had proved himself utterly loyal and dependable, an incisive thinker, and a constant advocate of Spanish power, especially in the Atlantic and the north. In March 1579 Philip II summoned him from Rome with the words: 'I have special need of your person and your help in the tasks and cares of government . . . the sooner you come the happier I shall be.'[4] With him was recalled Juan de Idiáquez, Spanish ambassador in Venice. Only when the new team was virtually in position did Philip move against his former favourite. On the evening of 28 July 1579 Pérez worked with the king on some papers until ten o' clock; an hour after he left he was arrested. Shortly afterwards the Princess of Eboli, who had been threatening those who maligned her associate, especially Mateo Vázquez, and whose growing insubordination Philip found intolerable, was also taken into custody. For the rest of her life she was confined to an apartment in her palace at Pastrana. The case of Pérez himself was left for longer investigation.[5] On 1 August Granvelle arrived at court and received his instructions; in the same month Idiáquez was appointed secretary of state in place of Pérez. With a new—and harder—administration, Philip II was ready to complete his reorientation of Spanish policy and to extend his power in the Atlantic. Granvelle's official appointment was to the presidency of the Council of Italy, but he was also Philip's chief adviser in northern affairs and, until about a year before his death in 1586, the leader of the entire administration.[6] And his first mission was the enterprise of Portugal.

Since the end of the fifteenth century relations between Spain and Portugal had hung on a delicate balance of rivalry and collaboration. After their early competition for empire the two countries had found a *modus vivendi*, Spain gravitating towards America, Portugal towards the Indian Ocean. Their imperial economies thus became complementary: Portugal, whose empire was essentially a commercial one, needed Spanish American gold and silver for exchange purposes, while Spain had to buy the pepper,

[3] See above, pp. 291–92.

[4] See Merriman, *The Rise of the Spanish Empire*, iv. 350; van Durme, *El Cardenal Granvela*, p. 343.

[5] See below, pp. 360–61.

[6] van Durme, *op. cit.*, pp. 343–49.

spices, and silks from the Portuguese East Indies which her own empire lacked. From then onwards they had a common interest in preserving their colonial monopoly against incursions from the powers of northern Europe, and Portugal collaborated with her neighbour in protecting the Atlantic crossing. But Spain was the more powerful of the two partners, in manpower, territory, and revenue. And Philip II, like most of his contemporaries, felt greater security in sovereignty than in alliances: as long as Portugal was independent, a vital part of the Iberian peninsula and a rich overseas empire might escape his influence and fall under that of a rival power. For this reason he had his eyes fixed on Portugal long before his nephew Sebastian died in 1578, and he was ready to assert his claims to the Portuguese crown as soon as the opportunity occurred. The opportunity came sooner than he expected; Sebastian did not leave a direct heir. He was succeeded by his great-uncle, the Cardinal Henry, the last surviving legitimate son of Manoel I; and the reign of this epileptic old man could be no more than an interlude, with the problem of succession still to be solved. Portugal herself was hardly in a position to withstand the crisis, for the disaster of Alcazar-Kebir reduced her power and disrupted her economy. A large part of the Portuguese nobility was captured by the infidel; to pay the enormous ransoms the country had to empty itself of specie needed in its commercial relations with the Far East, as well as of jewels and precious stones. The many prisoners taken drained the tiny kingdom of manpower it could ill afford to lose and weakened it militarily. To crown all, the succession fell into the incompetent hands of an old man; irresolute and vindictive, Cardinal Henry dismissed the old administration but failed to provide the country with the leadership it required. For all these reasons Portugal was now extremely vulnerable to foreign intervention.

As son of the Empress Isabella, eldest daughter of Manoel I, Philip II had strong claims to the Portuguese crown after Cardinal Henry.[7] True, there were also rival claimants, among them the Duchess of Braganza, Catherine de Medici, queen mother of France, and Antonio, the Prior of Crato, who was an illegitimate descendant of Manoel I. But none of their claims were as strong as those of the Spanish king. Philip II was convinced that his hereditary rights were incontestable, and to get them recognised in Portugal he began a campaign of propaganda and diplomacy. Spanish jurists and theologians were recruited to demonstrate the justice of his cause. Through his agents in Lisbon and his aristocracy on the Luso-Spanish border he addressed to the Portuguese public, especially the nobility and the procurators of the cortes, a series of messages which contained a mixture

[7] See A. Dánvila, *Felipe II y el rey Don Sebastián de Portugal* (Madrid, 1954), and *Felipe II y la sucesión de Portugal* (Madrid, 1956).

of flattery, promises, and threats, and usually a reference to Spanish military power.[8] To Lisbon he sent his Portuguese expert, Christóvão de Moura, whose judicious use of money—but especially promises of money—recruited a Spanish party. Philip also received the collaboration of the Jesuits, who had great influence in Portugal not least with Cardinal Henry. Above all, he began to reconnoitre Portuguese frontier defences and to make ready for action. Yet in spite of this pressure he could not procure a Portuguese declaration in his favour, or hurry Cardinal Henry into organising one. And when the cardinal died in February 1580 he had still not solved the succession problem. On the other hand he had rendered one useful service to Philip.

To save Portuguese independence it would have been necessary to arm the country in support of a national candidate. The mass of the people, especially the urban population and the lower ranks of the secular clergy, abhorred the prospect of Spanish domination. But they were given no lead. The cardinal had neglected the problem of defence, preferring to spend money on ransoming the nobles in Morocco. In any case, were the propertied classes in Portugal, the nobles and the merchants, ready to make the sacrifices necessary to equip a national army? If the Portuguese people were betrayed, they were betrayed by their own ruling class. And the latter had compelling reasons not to resist. Anyone with a stake in colonial trade would be tempted to seek the support of Spain rather than resist her. They needed American treasure, many of their ships were already profitably employed in the service of Spain and the Spanish Indies, and they could hope for further protection against corsairs and foreign rivals on the immense ocean routes which separated them from their sources of wealth. Moreover, as neighbour of a greater state, Portugal could only have maintained its position as the last independent unit in the peninsula by alliance with the enemies of Spain, the Protestant English or Dutch, or the Calvinist-ridden French, and such an alliance—as the Prior of Crato was to discover—was incapable of rousing a national rally. But the Spaniards were aware of the possibility of foreign intervention, and they had it in mind when they moved into Portugal.

Cardinal Henry had left a council of regents to govern until his successor should be chosen. Of these, two or three were won to Philip II's cause and were useful to him in helping to immobilise Portuguese defences. But he had no intention of allowing them—or the cortes, or the pope—to regulate the succession; for he considered his rights were imprescriptible and not to be submitted to arbitration. And he was now in a position to enforce them,

[8] Duque de Maura, *El designio de Felipe II y el episodio de la Armada Invencible* (Madrid, 1957) pp. 42–62, 65–66; J. Reglá, Contribución al estudio de la anexión de Portugal a la Corona de España en 1580', *Hispania*, xxi. (1961), 22–48.

thanks to the preparations made by Granvelle.[9] In the early months of 1580, with government encouragement, the Castilian nobles began to raise forces at their own expense, while the towns contributed troops, ships, and funds in a national effort which underlined the inertia of the Portuguese. And with Granvelle's insistence, Philip overcame his aversion from the Duke of Alba and recalled him to service in February 1580 as commander-in-chief of the invading army. By the middle of June all was ready; the Spanish army crossed the frontier near Badajoz, watched by the king himself, and advanced rapidly on Lisbon, while the fleet under the Marquis of Santa Cruz stationed itself at the mouth of the Tagus. Between the two Don Antonio and his nationalist supporters were helpless. Lisbon surrendered at the end of August. Don Antonio, wounded in battle, escaped to the north pursued by a cavalry force under Sancho Dávila, and eventually took ship abroad. The southern part of the country was occupied by the supporting forces of the Spanish grandees. It took only four months to occupy the whole of Portugal. Philip II boasted: 'I inherited it, I bought it, I conquered it.' In fact Portugal was practically handed over to him.

Already before the occupation Philip II had promised to respect the constitutional rights of the Portuguese. Now he came to Portugal to implement his promises. At the cortes of Thomar in April 1581 he was formally recognised as king of Portugal and arranged the terms of annexation, which were published the following year in a *carta patente*.[10] He undertook never to hold the Portuguese cortes outside the kingdom and never to legislate on Portuguese affairs in a foreign assembly; the office of viceroy was to be conferred only on Portuguese or members of the royal family; administrative, military, naval, and ecclesiastical appointments were to be reserved exclusively to Portuguese; the country was to be garrisoned only by Portuguese forces; for consultation on Portuguese affairs the king was to retain a group of specified advisers and officials, all of Portuguese birth, who would compose a Council of Portugal; colonial trade was to remain unchanged, administered by Portuguese officials, conducted by Portuguese merchants, and carried in Portuguese ships; finally, all frontier customs between Castile and Portugal were to be abolished, and there were provisions against the introduction of Castilian taxation. A sixteenth-century monarch could hardly have conceded more to a conquered country. Portugal was not incorporated in the crown of Castile or treated as a subject nation; it preserved its administration and its identity, even more effectively than the other kingdoms of the Spanish crown. The concessions made by Philip II reflected not only his anxiety to avoid opposition but also his permanent principles of government and his conviction that regional

[9] van Durme, *op. cit.*, pp. 349–52.

[10] Merriman, *op. cit.*, iv. 372–78.

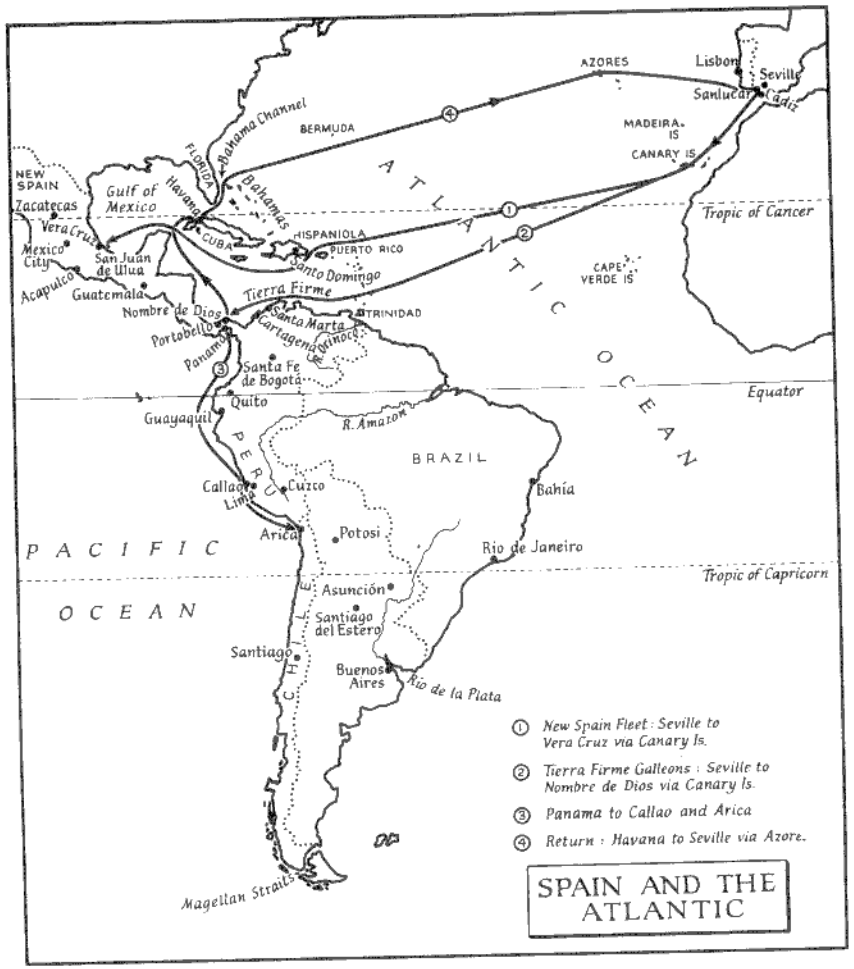
devolution was the best way of ruling his many kingdoms. And on the whole Philip II kept his promises. Naturally he chose Portuguese advisers and officials who were most Castilianised, like Moura, and made a member of his own family, the Archduke Albert of Austria, his viceroy; and in 1593 he seems to have restored the frontier customs between Portugal and Castile. But apart from this there was no direct violation of the pledge of 1582 until the reign of Philip IV.[11]

On receipt of the news from the metropolis the Portuguese empire rallied to Philip II without a fight. In Goa, the East Indies, and Brazil the new régime brought little immediate change, and the king continued to appoint Portuguese officials. As this was a union of crowns, not of states or of nations, the economic effects were also limited; in itself the union could not overcome the vast distances which separated the Spanish and Portuguese empires or alter their different structures. Indeed, Portugal gained something. Her colonial economy had always rested on collaboration with Spain, as has been seen; now her association with the great power could be closer, and their mutual interests in preserving their monopoly more effectively promoted. The long-term prospects for Portugal, however, were not so promising, and collaboration ultimately reverted to rivalry. For Portugal now acquired the enemies of Spain as well as its king. The Dutch in particular found it more difficult to procure the spices which they had traditionally bought in Lisbon and were drawn to seek them directly in the Far East; in the 1590's they began their invasion of the Portuguese monopoly which was to end in its outright destruction, and in the following century they extended their offensive to Brazil.[12] And in the event, as Spain was fully extended defending her own empire, Portuguese interests were neglected.

In the Azores, however, Spanish intervention was decisive, for these were a strategic point in imperial communications, a rendezvous for incoming fleets from the Indies. As Don Antonio had adherents there, he sought to make the islands a base for the recovery of Portugal. Having failed to interest Elizabeth I in his project, he enlisted the assistance of a French expedition which left for the Azores in June 1582. But Philip II was ready for it. He sent the Marquis of Santa Cruz with a powerful Spanish-Portuguese force which destroyed the French contingent. Don Antonio escaped to England, and the French tried again the following year. Again they were pursued by Santa Cruz, and again they were beaten off. And this time Spain completed the conquest of the Azores.

[11] On Portugal under Spanish rule see D. Peres, ed. *Historia de Portugal* (8 vols., Barcelos, 1928–37), v. 289–474.

[12] See C. R. Boxer, *The Dutch in Brazil, 1624–1654* (Oxford, 1957).



Philip II was now ruler of a unified peninsula, with greater territorial and naval power in the Atlantic. He was also the possessor of the two largest colonial empires of the sixteenth century, the defences of which were improved by his acquisition of the Azores. This sudden aggrandisement naturally provoked his enemies, especially England. In a sense, of course, Spain needed Portugal as security against foreign intervention in the weakest part of the peninsula, in much the same way as England needed Ireland. But Portugal also gave Philip II greater striking power. The face of Spain was now turned unmistakably towards the west and the north. From the time Philip II took up residence in Lisbon—he stayed there from 1581 to 1583—he placed the centre of his composite empire on the edge of the ocean and gave notice to his enemies that he occupied a new and advanced position in the battle of the Atlantic. His great naval victories in the Azores in 1582–83 were a sign of the times; greater battles for greater stakes were to follow. In 1586 Granvelle advised Philip to reside permanently in Lisbon, where he could better organise an expedition against England: 'While France is devastated by civil war, and the Turk is seriously weakened by the attacks of Persia, the government will find it advantageous to transfer itself to Portugal, for from there it can draw on the resources of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic in order to launch the attack on England and continue the pacification of the Netherlands.'[13] Even without the presence of the king, Portugal was a strategic asset. And Philip II's naval advisers, frustrated by defensive warfare, were anxious to exploit it.

2. The Enterprise of England

The Marquis of Santa Cruz, whose great naval career from the battle of Lepanto to that of the Azores reflected the progress of Philip II's policy, could barely contain his excitement at the prospect of Spain's new-found strength in the Atlantic. In his brilliant action against the French squadron in 1583 he believed he had fought English ships, too, and that he had defeated two enemies at once. Now was the time, he urged, to take the offensive against England. From the Azores on 9 August 1583 he advised Philip to prepare an expedition for the following year to overthrow the 'heretic woman', make himself king of England, and thence subdue the Netherlands. He envisaged a direct sea-borne invasion, sailing from Spain, with himself in command. The king's reply was vague but not disheartening: 'The situation is such that it is not possible to speak with certainty at the moment . . . but I am ordering provisions of biscuit from Italy, and expediting the construction of galleons and the hire of ships in Vizcaya,

[13] van Durme, *op. cit.*, p. 370.

and everything else which seems necessary in preparation for a favourable opportunity; and I am also ordering Flanders to be ready for what you suggest.'[14]

In fact he had already sounded Farnese in words which showed that the idea of Santa Cruz had found a response in his own sentiments: 'We must stop the help which the rebels receive from England, and restore the latter to Catholicism'; if necessary, force would have to be considered; but he admitted that 'to launch the expedition in the sole expectation of assistance from the Catholics would be hazardous'. Farnese replied with characteristic realism. In his view little could be expected from the Catholic population in England which was too weak to organise a rising, while 'the English Catholic exiles speak more from a desire to return home than with a sense of reality'; Spain must operate alone, without allies, and would therefore have to provide a large invasion force, at least 34,000 troops; absolute secrecy was necessary, otherwise England would take alarm and organise her defences and alliances; therefore, the expedition should be launched from the Netherlands where troop movements were a daily occurrence, and in any case the Channel crossing was infinitely easier than the voyage from Spain; if the operation were successful, of course, it would hasten the reduction of the Low Countries, but it was Farnese's own view that it would be better by far 'to complete the conquest of the Low Countries first—the possession of Flushing would facilitate the operation against England'.[15] By the end of 1583, therefore, Philip II had on his desk a naval and a military plan for the invasion of England, one seeking to launch it directly from Spain, the other, though with more diffidence, suggesting a cross-Channel expedition from the Low Countries. The idea of the Spanish Armada was born. All the prudent king now needed was an opportunity and, still more perhaps, a final push from his enemies.

Throughout 1584 the project remained in cold storage. Two things prevented it from dying—English action in the Low Countries and in the Indies. On all fronts the cold war was becoming warmer. In January 1584 formal diplomatic relations between Spain and England ended when the Spanish ambassador in London, Bernardino de Mendoza, was expelled on a charge of complicity in the Throckmorton plot for the liberation of

[14] Santa Cruz to Philip II, 9 Aug. 1583, in C. Fernández Duro, *La Armada Invencible* (2 vols., Madrid, 1885), i. 241–43; Philip II to Santa Cruz, 23 September 1583, *ibid.*, p. 243, and Maura, *op. cit.*, 162–63. The outstanding modern work on the Spanish Armada is G. Mattingly, *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada* (London, 1959); on the planning of the operation, though no precise dates are given, see pp. 80–85.

[15] Philip II to Farnese, 12 September 1583, in J. Lefèvre, *Correspondance de Philipe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas.* Deuxième partie. (4 vols., Brussels, 1940–60), ii. 405–6; Farnese to Philip II, 30 November 1583, *ibid.*, ii. 428–29, and van der Essen, *Alexandre Farnèse*, iii. 160–63.

Mary Queen of Scots and the deposition of Elizabeth. In the Netherlands William of Orange was assassinated in July 1584 by the Burgundian Balthazar Gérard, 'whose heroic action', remarked Farnese, 'is an example to the whole world'. Farnese himself, crowning the recovery of the southern provinces with the capture of Antwerp in August 1585, was now poised to move on Holland and Zeeland. This double blow to the rebel cause, together with the immobilisation of France by the outbreak of civil war in the spring of 1585, persuaded Elizabeth to intervene directly in the Netherlands. In August 1585 she signed a treaty with the United Provinces by which she pledged military aid in return for the right to put English garrisons into Brill and Flushing, the likeliest invasion ports; at the end of the year the Earl of Leicester led an expeditionary force 7,000 strong across the Channel. The new alliance was not a complete success, but it was sufficient to thwart Farnese's programme in the north, and it forced Philip II to ask himself again whether the best place to defend the Netherlands was in England. Meanwhile, English maritime hostility had forced him to consider whether England was also the best place to defend the Indies.

In May 1585 Philip II ordered the seizure of all English ships in Spanish ports. In September Elizabeth released Drake and his fleet, nominally to make reprisals for the Spanish action, in fact to wage outright—though undeclared—warfare on Spain and her empire by raiding colonies and, if possible, intercepting returning treasure fleets. After calling on Vigo, and a costly diversion to Cape Verde, Drake made for the Caribbean where he swooped on the unprepared and undefended town of Santo Domingo in Hispaniola, occupied it for a month, subjected it to organised pillage, and left with a ransom of 25,000 ducats and a haul of miscellaneous booty. From there he sailed to Cartagena on the Main, a more important centre protected by a strong natural position and already warned of Drake's approach. Again, however, the fortifications were weak and there was no garrison, so Drake had little difficulty in capturing it; again he burnt and demolished buildings until he got the required ransom (107,000 ducats). Then, as he had not the resources to sustain a base in the heart of the Spanish empire, he withdrew, outraged that he should be considered a mere pirate.[16] The expedition was not a spectacular success: it had done considerable damage to public and private buildings but not to fortifications, for there were few of these in the Indies; and even counting the ransom money the promoters were out of pocket, for Drake had missed two

[16] According to a Spanish report, Drake found at Cartagena some dispatches warning of his coming, 'and because in them it read "Francis Drake, corsair" he was much offended, as though he were not a corsair'; see I. A. Wright, ed., *Further English Voyages to Spanish America, 1583–1594* (London, Hakluyt Society, 1951), p. 134.

treasure fleets with their vast cargoes. Indeed, the treasure supply to Spain —the fuel for the offensive she was preparing—continued to flow undisturbed: the Mexican fleet reached Spain with its bullion in 1586 and the Main fleet in the following year.[17] Nevertheless, Drake's expedition was an act of war which no self-respecting monarch could ignore, least of all when so much wealth and power was at stake. Philip II had been given another demonstration that his imperial defences were vulnerable, his own subjects unprotected, and English privateers virtually immune. The danger to Spain's life-line was growing, and it was now clear that unless she asserted herself in the Atlantic her prospects as an imperial power were doomed. The Spanish king did not harbour these sentiments in isolation, remote from the desires of his subjects. They, too, wanted the issue with England settled; the merchant and maritime classes in particular pressed for a crushing blow against the national enemy, whose sea-marauders struck at their vital interests.[18] And Philip II was now prepared to fight for command of the sea.

On 17 August 1585, the same day as the capitulation of Antwerp, Philip II again brought up the subject of the enterprise of England, requesting Farnese to consider what form an invasion should take and what could be done from the Low Countries when the moment was propitious.[19] The project was on the move again, and it was now clear that in Philip's mind at least it was a question of a double operation, a military expedition from the Low Countries as well as a maritime one from Spain. And it was precisely Drake's appearance on the Spanish coast in September 1585, and his subsequent offensive in the Indies, which revived the Spanish side of the operation and brought the idea of a sea enterprise out of cold storage. In collaboration with his admiral, Santa Cruz, and his governor general in Andalucía, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, the king began to prepare a sea-going fleet to pursue Drake to the Indies and challenge him at sea; throughout the spring of 1586 the equipping and manning of the fleet were given priority in Seville, and Philip urged Santa Cruz to sail as soon as possible, pointing out that to take a squadron to the Indies did not mean abandoning the enterprise of England—on the contrary it would facilitate it.[20] But preparations were slow and eventually it proved to be too late to catch Drake at sea. Even so the effort was not wasted: Santa Cruz's fleet was now made the basis for a great Armada to search out the sea-raiders in their home base. And as the machinery went into motion the link between the Indies and the Armada became closer, embracing not only objectives but also resources. Early in 1587 Medina Sidonia, who was the king's chief agent on the commissariat side of naval preparations in Andalucía, requested

[17] *Ibid.*, p. lxvi.
[18] See above, pp. 153–54.
[19] van der Essen, *op. cit.*, v. 160.
[20] Duro, *La Armada Invencible*, i. 329–30.

advice on whether there should be a trading fleet to New Spain that year in view of the needs of the Armada being assembled in Lisbon; his own view was that it was essential to maintain yearly fleet sailings to the Indies 'since on communications between these two worlds depends our wealth and power in this one'. The king's opinion, transmitted through his secretary, Idiáquez, underlined the dual motive of the enterprise and the fact that the interests of the Indies and those of the Armada were not incompatible:

> The intervention of the English in Holland and Zeeland, together with their infestation of the Indies and the Ocean, is of such a nature that defensive methods are not enough to cover everything, but forces us to apply the fire in their homeland, and so fiercely that they will have to rush back and retire from elsewhere. . . . They are powerful at sea, and that is their great asset; therefore His Majesty's Armada should not sail under-strength but should be the largest and most powerful one possible. On this assumption His Majesty requires your opinion on whether the New Spain fleet had better be detached from its normal duties this year in order to reinforce the Armada with its full complement of troops, seamen, ships, artillery, and the rest. For the objective of this Armada is no less the security of the Indies than the recovery of the Netherlands.[21]

After the king's initiative in reviving the enterprise of England in the second half of 1585, Santa Cruz himself returned to the theme, and this time, in view of Drake's expedition to the Caribbean, he too linked it unmistakably with imperial defence. On 13 January 1586 he again urged Philip II to attack England, arguing that the queen of England, lacking resources to defend her kingdom at home, operated by sending fleets to make war on Spain at sea and in the Indies; to this the king had still made no effective reply, yet his subjects were losing heavily in trade and property, and the crown itself was losing much more in revenue than an invasion of England would cost; 'these', he concluded, 'are the defects of defensive wars'. Philip II then asked Santa Cruz for a plan of campaign, and within two months the admiral had prepared his famous 'Relation'.[22] In it he asked for 150 sail, not counting freighters, and over 60,000 troops, estimated the cost of an eight months' campaign at nearly four million ducats, and showed that he still conceived the expedition as a unified one from Spain. The king, however, had already been forming his own views on this point, and on 7 February he again requested information and advice from Farnese.

[21] Medina Sidonia to Idiáquez, 22 Feb. 1587, Maura, *op. cit.*, pp. 163–67; Idiáquez to Medina Sidonia, 28 Feb. 1587, *ibid.*, pp. 167–68.
[22] Duro, *La Armada Invencible*, i. 244–47, 150–319.

The latter's dispatch of 20 April outlined a programme more akin to the ideas of the king than to those of Santa Cruz.[23] 'The substance of the England operation', argued Farnese, 'consists in three elements: the first and principal one is secrecy; the second is security against France; the third is security in the Low Countries.' From principles he passed to technical requirements. He would need a striking-force of 30,500 troops; this could be concentrated at Dunkirk, Nieuport, and Gravelines in readiness for a quick crossing in barges escorted by a fighting squadron to a point between Dover and Margate. But the essential condition for this kind of operation was secrecy, for it was extremely vulnerable to naval attack. Therefore, in case the English fleet were alerted, Farnese formulated an alternative plan. This required 'mastery of the sea'; the king should equip a powerful fleet in Spain, capable of destroying or containing the English squadrons, and thus guaranteeing the crossing of Farnese's troops. In his view, therefore, an Armada was only necessary if the element of surprise were lost in the cross-Channel operation from the Low Countries; in that case an Armada would have to force a passage through to the invasion point. But he admitted his fear that the enterprise was now common knowledge.

Considering the two plans, that of his admiral and that of his general, Philip II gradually integrated them into one of his own. Farnese would assemble an expeditionary force on the Flemish coast, ready to embark in barges. Santa Cruz would prepare a fighting fleet at Lisbon which would cope with the English navy and carry a strong force of Spanish infantry. The Armada would rendezvous with Farnese's army and escort it to an invasion point somewhere near the mouth of the Thames, preferably 'the cape of Margate'. Once the invasion force had landed, Santa Cruz would secure its communications by sea; he could also engage the English fleet if necessary or possible, though the main function of the Armada was to convoy a landing-force.[24] In this way the king made use of the nucleus of a fleet which Santa Cruz had already assembled; he availed himself of the incomparable skill of Farnese in land warfare, and employed his Flanders veterans rather than carry the whole army from Spain; and he kept the way open for retreat. To this extent the plan was plausible. On the other hand it contained some serious flaws.

The dual command was dangerous: it presupposed perfect liaison between the admiral and the general, and liaison between Philip II's subordinates was never perfect, least of all when the distance separating them was that

[23] Farnese to Philip II, 20 April 1586, Lefèvre, *Correspondance*, iii. 105–107; van der Essen, *op. cit.*, v. 164–68.
[24] E. Herrera Oria, S.J., *La Armada Invencible, 1587–89. Documentos procedentes del Archivo General de Simancas* (Valladolid, 1929), pp. 130–34.

between Lisbon and the Low Countries. Philip II directed the operation personally; he was the sole co-ordinator, holding all the strings and negotiating with each commander separately. And Philip II was a long way from the field of action. The result was that his commanders could never keep up with his frequent changes of mind—as late as December 1587 he was ordering Santa Cruz to prepare two armadas, and urging Farnese to cross the Channel before any armada arrived—and neither the general nor the admiral ever really understood each other's objectives. As communications between the two forces were so faulty, it was almost impossible to synchronise their junction in advance, especially as the Spaniards did not command a suitable port in the Low Countries. This, indeed, was the basic defect in the operation: lack of a deep-water port, capable of taking the Spanish galleons, exposed the Armada to operating far from home without a base, and left Farnese's army without an escort from the point of embarkation. Farnese referred frequently to this gap in the plan, and Philip II himself understood it, for as early as December 1585 he had admitted to Farnese that 'without a port we can do nothing'.[25] Yet the two commanders never discussed it between themselves, and the king seems to have persuaded himself that a junction could be effected in mid-Channel or at 'the cape of Margate'. But it was folly to assume that the Dutch and English blockading squadrons would allow Farnese's barges to emerge unscathed, and that Margate Roads afforded any refuge. And there still remained the most insuperable obstacle of all, the invasion and occupation of England. Behind Elizabeth's apparent inertia, her retention of Drake, and her refusal to sanction Hawkins's plan for a blockade of the Spanish coast, lay a readiness to move into action quickly once danger approached. The English fleet was a powerful fighting force, composed of swift, weatherly and well-armed galleons, designed to sink ships rather than kill men. Moreover, in spite of the record of the army of Flanders and its commander, the conquest and occupation of a foreign country by an invading army, unsure of a rising in its support once it got there, was a highly speculative operation, especially as English land defences were not negligible. To question ultimate objectives, however, would be to lose faith in the entire enterprise, and even the realist Farnese was not yet reduced to that extreme. The fruits of success were too tempting.

In any case Spain had immense reserves of power, and on these Philip II now began to draw. From mid-1586 his commissariat was moving, slowly

[25] van der Essen, *op. cit.*, v. 162; again in February 1587 Philip admitted that they only disposed of one sure port—Dunkirk—and it could not take large vessels, a problem on which he wanted Farnese's advice, Philip II to Farnese, 28 Feb. 1587, Lefèvre, *Correspondance*, iii. 185.

but with purpose. In these years the crown's income from the Indies was enormous;[26] to it was joined the revenue from Castile and from the church —in spite of his scepticism about the king of Spain's motives, Pope Sixtus V renewed the *cruzada* for seven years at the end of 1585. With money, it seemed, everything was possible. Contracts were made for naval stores and provisions, the search was begun for Baltic timber, for ships and seamen; the Spanish naval yards increased their efforts; and in spite of English vigilance in the Channel convoys from the Hanse towns reached Spain with vital supplies of food, naval stores, and ordnance and some of their vessels were bought to augment the Spanish fleet. All this, of course, took time and the cost was appalling. Farnese had stipulated an invasion date in October 1586; apart from the element of surprise, speed was cheaper. But Philip II never underrated English power and believed that overwhelming force would be necessary to overcome it; in July 1586 he informed Farnese that there was no hope of the expedition being ready before the spring of 1587. By that time an event had occurred which gave him a greater sense of urgency. The execution of Mary Stuart in England on 18 February 1587 had a double significance for Philip II: it removed the risk of France benefiting from the substitution of Mary for Elizabeth on the English throne, and it enabled Philip to assert his own claims to the English throne, if not for himself then for his daughter. His hereditary claims were not strong, but they were improved at least in papal eyes by the Protestantism of Mary's son, James VI of Scotland. In July 1587 Philip reached an agreement with Sixtus V in a formal treaty by which the pope promised him a subsidy of one million ducats on condition that the expedition sailed before the end of the year and that Spanish troops actually landed in England; and if it were successful then Philip would nominate, with papal approval, a king pledged to Catholicism.[27] Since the execution of Mary Stuart, Philip had convinced even the pope that his preparations were serious, as indeed they were, both inside and outside Spain.

Farnese had underlined the need for 'security against France'. The object was to immobilise France and thus prevent her from assisting England and from intervening in the Netherlands during the absence of the Spanish army. The means were already at hand—civil dissension. Since the death of the Duke of Anjou in June 1584 the legal heir to the throne then occupied by Henry III was the Protestant Henry of Navarre. The prospect of the latter's succession was as abhorrent to Philip II as it was to the Catholic party in France, and on 31 December 1584 Philip concluded with the Guises the secret treaty of Joinville which revived the Holy League in France by giving it the support of Spanish subsidies, with a programme of

[26] See above, pp. 172–73.

[27] See above, pp. 284–85.

stamping out Protestantism and preventing Henry of Navarre from succeeding to the throne. In the following months Philip II's ambassador, now Bernardino de Mendoza, who found greater scope for his talents in France than he had done in England, established close contact with the Catholic revolutionaries, and acted as Philip's paymaster to the League. Thanks to Mendoza's skilful diplomacy, playing on the political and religious divisions within the country, France was indeed gradually immobilised. In July 1585 Henry III, cornered by the League and its Spanish ally, outlawed the Huguenots; in September Sixtus V issued a bull denouncing Henry of Navarre as a lapsed Catholic and incapable of succeeding to the throne of France. For the next two years the Huguenots were fighting for survival, while Mendoza conspired with his allies to reduce the French crown to complete dependence on the Guise and the Catholic party. But timing was important, for the ambassador had to synchronise his operation with the actual departure of the Armada. Throughout 1587 he kept his preparations simmering and brought them to boiling point just at the right moment. By a *coup d'état* on 12 May 1588 Henry of Guise completed his control of Paris, and the king fled to Chartres. On the eve of the invasion of England France was neutralised and Farnese's western flank secured.[28]

Security in the Low Countries, the third of Farnese's stipulations, was more difficult to attain. Farnese aimed at leaving a large army, equal to that already there and capable of containing an offensive by the rebels during his absence. This he could do if he were given enough money. But there was still the problem of improving his position on the coast, where he still did not hold a deep-water port in which his army could join the Spanish fleet. In the summer of 1587 he moved quickly on Sluys on the Flemish coast, a strategic point not so much because of its harbour facilities as because of its position on the network of waterways between Bruges and the east Flanders coast across which he had to get his troops and barges from inland. In appalling conditions, with his usual superb technique, he laid siege to Sluys with a small flotilla at sea and his veteran infantry on land. After one of the most difficult actions he had ever fought he took it on 5 August, aided as much by English and Dutch ineptitude as by his own skill. He then began constructing canals linking Sluys and Nieuport, to enable his barges to pass from the Scheldt above Antwerp to Dunkirk, the embarkation point, without risking destruction in open water at the hands of the Dutch.[29] But Sluys was not the deep-water port Farnese was seeking. He himself wanted to take Flushing, and was increasingly of the opinion that defeat of the rebels was necessary to conquer England rather than the reverse.

[28] Mattingly, *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, pp. 45–53, 136–56, 193–213.
[29] van der Essen, *op. cit.*, v. 127–40, 220–21; Lefèvre, *Correspondance*, iii. 237, 334.

But Philip II, anxious to save his resources, had decided to run down his military machine in the Netherlands before restarting it for the invasion of England. Yet the invasion was taking longer and longer to prepare; the greater the delay the greater the deterioration suffered by existing forces, and the more costly the whole enterprise became. Farnese now expected the invasion to take place in 1587 at the latest. With 30,000 troops and the money he had received from Spain his resources were at their peak in September 1587. By March 1588 sickness and death had reduced his army to 17,000, his provisions were consumed, his money was spent, and he was as far away from England as ever. In between he complained bitterly to Philip II: immobilised by the ruinous delay, he was even prevented from making progress in the Low Countries; his troops were in poor condition, and above all the Armada would not be able to co-operate directly with him because he still had no port capable of taking vessels of heavy draught; therefore its rôle would have to be diversionary, to keep the English fleet occupied and prevent it from attacking his barges; even so the Dutch squadrons would be able to blockade his exit from the Flemish coast; to crown all the whole enterprise was now the talk of Europe, and the only way of laying a false trail lay in peace negotiations.[30] In the autumn of 1587 the king himself had instructed Farnese that while the invasion of England was to go forward without fail, with no peace on any terms, the English were to be lured into negotiations as a diversion. Elizabeth, in fact, was ready to talk peace, but not to close her eyes to the obvious military planning that accompanied the negotiations.

The cause of the delay was the difficulty of getting the Armada to sea. In 1587 Drake struck it a heavy, though not fatal, blow. Raiding Cadiz at the end of April he caught, among other units, the New Spain fleet, on which Philip intended to draw to reinforce the Armada; altogether he sank, burnt or captured about 24 vessels, and thus reduced the stock of ships at Philip's disposal.[31] Then, from a temporary base at Sagres, he captured some supply ships carrying barrel-staves needed for making water-butts and casks; if the Armada was subsequently deficient in provisions it was due to the initiative of Drake rather than the fraudulence of its contractors.[32] After the departure of the raiders Spanish preparations were resumed, but the search for overwhelming striking power made Santa Cruz more prudent than his master. From September 1587, with mounting impatience, Philip sent letter after letter to his admiral, urging him to sail and giving him a few weeks' grace at a time in

[30] Farnese to Philip II, 12 Sept. 1587, 21, Dec. 1587, 30 Mar. 1588, van der Essen, *op. cit.*, v. 188–90, 198–200; Lefèvre, *Correspondance*, iii. 257–58, 285–86.
[31] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 1, pp. 726–28, 769.
[32] Mattingly, *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, pp. 116–17.

order to complete his preparations, add to his ships and improve his stores. The king's frustration led him to issue conflicting orders which only increased the confusion and underlined the failure of liaison long in advance of the Armada's sailing. In December he was trying to get Santa Cruz to form two armadas, one to go straight to Farnese with troops, return, and join the other to form a single unit. But there was still no movement from Santa Cruz's fleet, and in desperation Philip ordered Farnese to sail without it, thus abandoning one of the essential features of his own plan. Farnese, who had already thrashed this out with Philip and thought they had reached agreement at last, replied that he was ready to cross the Channel on his own in a longboat but he could not send his troops to their death by launching them without an escort.[33] On this occasion at least Philip II was saved from irretrievable disaster by cooler heads than his own. Eventually the expedition was due to sail in February 1588, though Santa Cruz still did not have the fleet he wanted and now he was saying he could not sail until money arrived to pay his men. But for Santa Cruz the moment for sailing never came. He died at Lisbon on 9 February.

Philip II had already decided on his successor—Alonso de Guzmán, the thirty-eight-year-old Duke of Medina Sidonia, son-in-law of the Princess of Eboli, captain-general of Andalucía. Medina Sidonia was a civilian, thoughtful, industrious and honest, but not a seaman. He did not want the appointment, and he tried to argue his way out of it, pleading proclivity to sea-sickness, poverty, inexperience of military and naval affairs, and ignorance of the strategy and tactics of the enterprise.[34] In fact he underrated himself. Philip II wanted an illustrious grandee, powerful in his own right and the possessor of natural rank over the hard-bitten captains in the fleet. For about ten years Philip had used Medina Sidonia as a sort of unpaid viceroy in Andalucía, a key position in imperial strategy, where he had served the king well in civil, military, and naval administration. There he had acquired experience in fitting out fleets, especially the Indies fleets, and had proved himself an intelligent amateur, capable of turning his hands to most assignments and ready to listen to expert advice; for the past few years he had already been used in an administrative capacity in equipping the Armada. And by 1588 the Armada had become increasingly an administrative problem. The last-minute preparations of Santa Cruz for a February sailing had produced chaos, men and supplies thrown haphazardly into ships, captains grabbing what they could by way of stores and ordnance, and everything

[33] Herrera Oría, *La Armada Invencible*, pp. 1–11, 98–100, and the same author's *Felipe II y el marqués de Santa Cruz en la empresa de Inglaterra* (Madrid, 1946), pp. 53–61, 138–39; van der Essen, *op. cit.*, v. 201–202.

[34] Medina Sidonia to Idiáquez, 16 February 1588, Maura, *op. cit.*, pp. 241–44; see also, pp. 81 ff., 213 ff.

rapidly deteriorating from inactivity. So Philip II hurried Medina Sidonia to Lisbon before everything disintegrated for lack of a commander, and the admiral's first job was to bring order out of the confusion left by his predecessor. The duke was good at staff work; he established sound relations with his squadron commanders, Juan Martínez de Recalde, Miguel de Oquendo, and Pedro de Valdés, formed them into a council of war, and with them worked out signals, sailing directions and orders, fighting instructions, and a plan of formation against English attacks. Like Santa Cruz and the rest of the Spanish navy he appreciated the importance of guns and realised that he was going to get little opportunity for hand-to-hand combat. He never overcame the shortage of heavy long-range guns capable of destroying ships, or of trained gunners, but he procured more artillery than Santa Cruz had done, as well as more powder and shot, and he did not lead a fleet unarmed for Atlantic warfare. He also got more ships. Philip II had finally decided to detach the eight galleons of the Indies guard under Diego Flores de Valdés from their escort duty with the Main fleet and add them to the Armada, which was also reinforced with the greater part of the Indies fleets themselves.[35] Finally, the duke managed to recruit experienced pilots, some of them Englishmen, familiar with the Channel and the North Sea.

By now the new commander understood the essentials of the operation, which he had in detailed instructions from the king. The central features had survived all the shifts of circumstance and false alarms of royal policy. 'On receiving my order, sail with the whole Armada direct to the English Channel, through there up to the Cape of Margate, to join the Duke of Parma and guard his crossing.' After Farnese's troops had made their landing, Medina Sidonia was to protect his line of supply; at his own discretion he might then give battle to the English fleet, but before that he was not to seek an encounter. 'You should take special note, however, that the enemy's aim will be to fight from a distance, since he has the advantage of superior artillery . . . while we must come to grips at close quarters.'[36] But Philip II did not explain how this was to be done, any more than he explained how the Armada was to overcome the lack of a suitable port in the Channel. He had finished his planning, and now he relied on his faith in divine assistance, a faith shared by the mass of his subjects, somewhat ruefully by his naval officers, and hardly at all by Rome. The Spanish view of the enterprise saw it as the work of God, undertaken with the sanction and support of the church. The king ordered public and private prayers for the expedition's

[35] Chaunu, *op. cit.*, vi., 2, tables 601–668, pp. 861–975; viii., 2, 1, p. 769.

[36] Philip II to Medina Sidonia, 1 April 1588, in G. P. B. Naish, 'Documents illustrating the history of the Spanish Armada', *Naval Miscellany*, vol. IV, ed. C. Lloyd (London, Navy Records Society, 1952), pp. 13–19; Maura, *op. cit.*, pp. 251–52.

success, and advised Medina Sidonia that his men should live as good Christians and 'refrain from swearing and blasphemy and other vices which so offend Our Lord'.[37] Before the fleet sailed all the men confessed and received Holy Communion, and with them went 180 chaplains.

By May 1588 the whole Armada was standing out from Lisbon—two squadrons of galleons in the first line, four squadrons of armed merchantmen in the second, a group of pinnaces for scouting, and a mass of freighters and supply vessels, in all 130 ships, carrying 2,431 pieces of artillery and 22,000 seamen and soldiers, the latter intended both to fight at sea and reinforce Farnese's army. It was less than the minimum estimate of Santa Cruz, and many of the ships were not weatherly, but it was still a formidable array. Its start, however, was not propitious: progress up the Iberian coast was slow, and food and water supplies were already defective. So it had to make for Corunna to take on fresh stores, and there on 19 June it was scattered by a storm. Medina Sidonia, who had been growing more pessimistic the further he got from Lisbon, now wrote a lengthy plea to the king, not so much the cry of a faint heart as an honest attempt to point out the grave risks involved in the operation, requesting him to abandon or defer the expedition because 'with the forces it commands how can it succeed against so powerful a kingdom with so many allies?[38] Philip briefly ordered the duke to reassemble his forces and take on fresh supplies, and to proceed before the weather got worse. With his conscience clear Medina Sidonia accepted the inevitable and from then on his morale improved. A month after the storm the ships were collected, repaired and provisioned, and by 29 July the Armada was off the Lizard. The next day it began to move cautiously up the Channel, and in England the beacons sent their signals across the country.

The main body of the English fleet under the Lord Admiral, Lord Howard of Effingham, and his second-in-command, Sir Francis Drake, was awaiting the Spaniards not, as Philip II supposed, at the eastern end of the Channel in Calais Roads but in the west at Plymouth. And before it even engaged the Armada it won a decisive advantage. As soon as they received word that the enemy was at the mouth of the Channel, Howard and Drake slipped out of Plymouth Sound and managed to get to the windward of the Spaniards; they thus won the weather-gauge and kept it for the rest of the engagement.[39]

[37] Maura, *op. cit.*, pp. 273–74.

[38] Medina Sidonia to Philip II, 24 June 1588, Duro, *La Armada Invencible*, ii. 134–37; Maura, *op. cit.*, pp. 258–61.

[39] See J. S. Corbett, *Drake and the Tudor Navy* (2 vols., London, 1898–99), ii. 208–21; on the Armada campaign see also, J. K. Laughton, ed., *State Papers Relating to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada* (London, Navy Records Society, 2 vols., 1894); D. W. Waters, 'The Elizabethan Navy and the Armada Campaign', *The Mariner's Mirror*, xxxv. (1949), M. Lewis, *The Spanish Armada* (London, 1960), and the same author's 'Armada Guns'; *Mariner's Mirror*, xxviii. (1942), xxix. (1943).

The English could now dictate the terms of battle, relentlessly following the Armada, in ships that were fast and weatherly enough to manoeuvre as they pleased and keep whatever distance they chose as they raked the enemy with their long-range artillery. But Medina Sidonia's captains knew their drill; with great precision the Spanish fleet manoeuvred into its famous crescent formation, presenting a solid defence to the English who followed in their new line-ahead formation and who had to be careful not to be trapped between the two wings. And although the English refused to be tempted in or to allow the Spaniards to grapple, their long-range bombardment, a relatively new technique, was not accurate or heavy enough to pierce galleons. So they failed to break the Armada. The seamanship, discipline, and fighting spirit of the Spaniards were superb; keeping a tight formation, refusing to abandon ships in battle, they moved slowly up the Channel day after day for nine days, while the English spent their shot to no great purpose. After four sharp battles the Armada was still unbroken and full of fight, and still moving on. By 6 August it was at Calais Roads, having lost only two vessels—largely by accident—and suffered relatively light casualties. On the other hand the English fleet was still to windward and was now augmented by the squadron blockading Farnese. And when Medina Sidonia anchored off Calais the crucial moment on which the whole enterprise hung—the meeting between the Armada and the army of Flanders—had arrived at last.

Since the middle of July Farnese had been ready; his troops and barges were assembled at the embarkation points, Nieuport and Dunkirk, awaiting the arrival of the Armada. The news he received confirmed his worst fears. As the Spanish fleet moved up the Channel a series of envoys reached him from Medina Sidonia, asking him to name the rendezvous, come out and join the Armada in the battle with the English, or alternatively to send him forty or fifty flyboats capable of holding the enemy fleet until Farnese made his exit. Flyboats were swift, shallow-draught warships needed for navigation off the Dutch and Flemish coasts. And Farnese did not have enough to break the Dutch blockade unaided. What he did have were canal barges for transporting his troops. These, as he had often insisted to Philip II, could not come out without an escort. As Farnese understood his instructions, it was the Armada's duty to assure *his* passage, not the reverse.[40] But it was equally impossible for Medina Sidonia to close in to the Flemish coast, for Spanish galleons drew water deeper than could be found around Dunkirk; the Armada had to remain in open sea, while the Dutch flyboats, constructed

[40] Farnese to Philip II, 22 June 1588, Lefèvre, *Correspondance*, iii. 323–24, van der Essen. *op. cit.*, v. 219–20; Medina Sidonia to Farnese, 6 Aug. 1588, Lefèvre, *op. cit.* iii. 344–45.

precisely for these shallow waters, waited to pounce on the invasion barges as soon as they emerged. There was, therefore, no rendezvous, and the enterprise failed in its most essential point. 'No one regrets this situation more than I do,' reported Farnese, 'from the very beginning I have regretted it.'[41] Philip II knew of these difficulties in advance from Farnese, but Medina Sidonia seems to have learnt them for the first time when he reached Calais. There his position was hopeless: he was exposed without a port, the English fleet had him covered from the windward, and Farnese found it 'humanly impossible' to meet him. But, with grim fatalism, the general went through the drill he had prepared. On 8 August, two days after the Armada's arrival off Calais, he began to embark his troops at Nieuport and Dunkirk; he was still blockaded by Dutch squadrons, and there was a high wind against him. The situation was being bitterly argued between Farnese and the impatient envoys of Medina Sidonia when news arrived which closed the discussion.

In its anchorage off Calais the Armada was a perfect target for fire-ships coming with the wind. Eight of these, launched by the English on the night of 7–8 August, did what guns had so far been unable to do—broke the Armada's formation. The Spaniards slipped their cables and scattered, while the English fleet, now 150 strong, came in for the kill. With a fine display of leadership, helped by skilful squadron commanders and disciplined crews, Medina Sidonia got his big warships into formation again off Gravelines. There, on 8 August, unable to grapple and short of ammunition, they were torn to pieces by the English guns, coming in to close range at last. But the Spaniards were determined to go down fighting; time after time the great galleons came back, and at the end of a day's destruction and slaughter, with their shot exhausted, they were still ready to do battle again, before a north-east squall ended the engagement. At Gravelines, for the first time, the Armada had taken a real beating; only four ships were lost, but the whole fleet was grievously damaged and the human casualties were enormous. It had been driven past the point where it hoped to unite with Farnese and there was no hope of regaining it. From now on it was at the mercy of the weather; driven perilously near the Zeeland sands, it was then blown up the North Sea, and Medina Sidonia had to decide to get his fleet home westwards round the British Isles, defeated and in retreat.

The autumn days were bitter ones for Spain. The great Farnese, helpless on the coast of Flanders, disembarked his troops and returned to Bruges to face a storm of criticism. Medina Sidonia, conscientious in retreat as in attack, led his battered fleet home in a nightmare voyage, losing thousands of his men in Ireland where the English garrison slaughtered those who were

[41] Farnese to Philip II, 7 Aug. 1588, Lefèvre, *Correspondance*, iii. 346–47; Farnese to Philip II, 10 Aug. 1588, *ibid.*, iii. 349–50; van der Essen, *op. cit.*, v. 226–27.

not drowned on the savage coasts. He reached Santander on 23 September, semi-delirious from sickness and privation, and protesting feverishly to the king that nothing would get him to sea again.[42] The condition of the survivors who followed him was even more pitiful, and hundreds died in port before they could be got ashore. The leadership of the duke and the skill of his pilots saved a large part of the Armada, perhaps forty–four out of its sixty eight fighting ships. But almost half of the surviving fleet proved to be unfit for further service, and the most grievous blow of all was the heavy mortality among officers and seamen; and in terms of naval power these were more difficult to replace than ships.

Philip II was outwardly unshaken. As years of planning, anxiety and expense collapsed in catastrophe, he continued to administer the affairs of his world empire. A Jesuit priest, Alonso Sánchez, was making his way to the Escorial to seek an interview with the king when one of the dispatches announcing the failure of the invasion of England arrived. Sánchez was seeking aid for the Philippines mission and had a plan for the invasion of China. In the circumstances discretion caused him not to press the latter on this occasion, but on the subject of the Philippines the king received him with his usual courtesy and equanimity, listened to his requests, took his papers, and offered to consider the matter.[43] If the morale of Spaniards did not collapse under the disaster it was partly because of the unshakeable continuity provided by their king. For Medina Sidonia he had not a word of reproach; he gave him permission to return to his estate at Sanlucar, continued to employ him in high office when he had recovered, and never sent him to sea again. The defeat of the Spanish Armada, of course, was not the fault of Medina Sidonia, whose courage and leadership could hardly have been bettered. Nor was it the fault of Farnese, whose tactical and moral sense alike prevented him from sending his army to its destruction. Circumstances were beyond the control of both commanders. If any human being was responsible it was Philip II himself, who failed to co-ordinate the two arms of his attack in the planning stage, and who, knowing he possessed no deep-water port, trusted in the superiority of his forces and decided to risk everything in the hope that somehow, somewhere a junction could be made. But even Philip could be excused in part, pushed as he was to defend his empire, even to the point of sending his fleet on an impossible mission. In any case the disaster was not decisive. England had won a half-success in that she forced Spain back to the starting-point, to begin her naval pro-

[42] Medina Sidonia to Idiáquez, 27 Sept. 1588, Maura, *op. cit.*, 265–66.

[43] F. Colín, *Labor Evangélica de la Compañía de Jesus en las Islas Filipinas* (ed. P. Pastells, S.J., 3 vols., Madrid, 1900–02), i. 407–09. I am indebted for this reference to Dr. J. S. Cummins.

gramme all over again. But England had not won the war, or even gained mastery of the sea. The Atlantic was too vast for any single power to dominate in the sixteenth century, and the war continued as before, a kind of stalemate. The English and the Dutch still controlled the Channel, and for his northern supplies Philip had to rely on the readiness of the Dutch to trade even with the enemy, and on the ability of the Hanseatic convoys occasionally to evade English patrols. But Spain still controlled the crossing to the Indies, and here she fought back more successfully.

As Philip II found it impossible for the moment to defend the Indies in England, he had to do what he could to defend them in America itself. Within two years after the defeat of the Armada he had reconstituted his Indies fleets, protecting them with a new force of fighting ships; and to secure his treasure shipments he assigned them to squadrons of *zabras*, fast frigates which could evade enemy raiders.[44] These were vital defence measures, for English privateering took a new lease of life after the defeat of the Armada. Drake's abortive counter-armada against Lisbon in 1589 showed that Spain no less than England was basically immune by land, and that there were greater profits to be found in maritime and colonial warfare. In the summer of 1589 the Earl of Cumberland established a temporary base in the Azores and seized some treasure from the Indies; in 1590 Hawkins and Frobisher made a similar attempt, though they returned home empty-handed; in 1593 Cumberland ravaged Havana and Trinidad. These were the more spectacular, though not the most profitable, expeditions. Every year hundreds of smaller privateering ventures returned a steady profit to their investors: between 1589 and 1591 at least 235 English vessels were at large between the eastern Atlantic and America, picking up what they could from Spanish commerce and colonies.[45] But they no longer raided with impunity: while Philip II was protecting the Atlantic crossing he was also improving his defences in America itself. Drake's great raid on the Caribbean in 1585–86 had really awoken Spain to the danger, and for the next fifteen years there was a consistent plan to defend the colonies by land as well as by sea.[46] In 1586 colonel Juan de Texeda, a military expert, and Juan Bautista Antoneli, the distinguished Italian engineer, were sent to the Caribbean on a tour of inspection, the former to decide what defences were needed, the latter what form they should take.[47] Texeda remained in the

[44] See above, pp. 167–68, 175, and references to Chaunu there.

[45] K. R. Andrews, ed., *English Privateering Voyages to the West Indies, 1588–1595* (Cambridge, Hakluyt Society, 1959), p. 16.

[46] R. D. Hussey, 'Spanish reaction to foreign aggression in the Caribbean to about 1680', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, ix. (1929), 286–302,

[47] Wright, *Further English Voyages to Spanish America, 1583–1594*, pp. 192–93. See also Lope de Vega, *La Dragontea* (2 vols., Madrid, 1935); this edition of Lope de Vega's poem, celebrating—with considerable poetic licence—the death of Drake, also contains a collection of documents on English activity in the Caribbean and on Spanish fortifications; see especially ii. 149–71.

Indies as governor of Havana, while Antoneli returned to Spain in 1587 to draw up a comprehensive plan for fortifying the Caribbean. This was approved by the king, and for the next few years fortifications of major ports like Havana, San Juan de Ulúa, Puerto Rico, and the newly founded Portobello, made rapid progress, while garrisons of regular troops were established or reinforced. In the same years the coast-guard fleets were improved, as local squadrons of galleys were strengthened, renewed or installed. As these were still considered inadequate, the king created for the whole of the Caribbean a new Windward Squadron, which sailed in 1598 and was composed of six frigates and other craft.

The efficiency of the new defences was demonstrated in 1595 at the expense of Spain's most inveterate enemies. Hawkins and Drake, going through the old routine, led another expedition to the Caribbean. It was ten years since Drake had been there, and this time the Spaniards were ready for him. The invaders were beaten off from Puerto Rico and Panama by superior forces, and in the course of the operation the two leaders died from sickness. In one sector at least, therefore, the war went in Spain's favour. Imperial communications and defence were stronger in the last ten years of Philip II's reign than they had ever been, and American treasure continued to swell his resources.

Nevertheless, indirectly Spain was grievously hurt by the English—and increasingly by the Dutch—naval offensive on the ocean and in America. She lost no colonies and little treasure, but the expense of defending them was crippling. To replace or repair ships, to build or renew fortifications, cost money—and the cost was increasing.[48] The increase was related to rising prices in Spanish shipyards from about 1580, a phenomenon noticed and criticised by contemporaries. In the 1580's the Marquis of Santa Cruz, who as well as being a naval officer was also, like his father before him, one of the principal contractors of the Spanish crown for warships, complained bitterly of the price of ships and of the sacrifices which the king demanded of shipowners in providing his armadas, for returns were so meagre. In 1611 Tomé Cano, a former shipper and author of a treatise on naval construction, estimated that the cost of shipbuilding in Spain had tripled since the last decades of the previous century. The main cause of the increase was persistent inflation. Timber and other raw materials for shipbuilding were scarce, and their price rose even higher than the general price increase in Spain.[49] Moreover, between 1580 and 1596, and above all from

[48] See the superb analysis by Chaunu, *op. cit.*, i. 204–208, and iii. 412, 437, 450, 468.

[49] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 224, 235.

1600 to 1628, wages in Spain increased much more quickly than the price of commodities. So the cost of labour as well as of raw materials, the determining elements in shipbuilding costs, advanced beyond the general price level, and both contributed to raising the cost of imperial defence. Spain was now feeling the pinch, and her discomfort was rendered more acute by the difficulty of getting foreign supplies. Spanish ships were unsuitable for the transport of naval stores, while English tactics were directed to preventing even neutral countries of northern Europe from trading in war materials with the Iberian peninsula. To obtain essential supplies the Spanish government was forced to conclude costly contracts with foreign firms, who had to be compensated for the risks they were running from English patrols, and sometimes the contracts opened breaches in the colonial monopoly when the terms included permission for the contractors to trade with America. The whole process increased the overheads of the Indies trade and gave Spanish merchants more reason to evade the defence tax; they refused to participate in the use of frigates for transporting treasure and valuable goods and the state had to underwrite the entire cost of this expedient.

There was, finally, another factor operating against the Spanish war effort. As is well known, prices rose more rapidly and more intensely in Spain than in the rest of Europe; in particular the heavy increase in the cost of shipbuilding was more peculiar to Spain than to her enemies. This was appreciated by English as well as by Spanish strategists: in July 1584, when Hawkins advocated a blockade of Spain, he estimated that even in peace conditions it was three times more expensive to equip ships in Spain than in England.[50] As the English and Dutch offensive was based on a less expensive naval economy than that of Spain, the cost of attack was cheaper than the cost of defence, another advantage to Spain's enemies. The exploits of Drake and the English privateers, therefore, while they won little from Spain in territory, trade, and treasure, wounded her deeply in her economy and war potential. They forced her to spend large sums of money on the Indies at a time when the cost of prolonged warfare was already inducing another bankruptcy. This drain on Spain's resources played its part in reducing her strength, and ultimately in hastening her decline.

Philip II was not unaware of what was happening, for he felt it in his finances. He was still determined, therefore, to destroy the marauders in their homeland. Since the winter of 1589 he had been planning a second Armada, hoping to improve on the first by giving it better ships, more long-range guns, a single command with improved co-ordination, and a deep-water port. To this extent he had learnt some lessons, though not the most obvious lesson of all—that England could not be conquered. The fleet

[50] J. A. Williamson, *Sir John Hawkins* (Oxford, 1927), pp. 409–10.

he had assembled by 1596 did not fulfil his expectations, but it was an encouraging sign of his power and resources. His determination to use it was confirmed when in the summer of that year an expedition under Howard and Essex occupied Cadiz for sixteen days, destroyed his New Spain fleet and looted his own territory. For some time he had been thinking of using Ireland as a first stage for an invasion of England, and he had already sent a liaison officer, arms and munitions, to the chiefs of Ulster. The plan was not unrealistic, for Ireland was inadequately garrisoned, contained a disaffected population, and could be approached from Spain by prevailing south-west winds.[51] In October he dispatched his new Armada, this time under the command of Martín de Padilla y Manrique, and destined for Ireland. But the south-west wind became a gale, which scattered the fleet and forced it to take refuge in Ferrol, having lost one-third of its ships and over 2,000 men.

Thereafter Philip was undecided whether to strike England directly or via Ireland; for in April 1596 the Spaniards, now at war with France as well as England, had captured Calais and so at last possessed a Channel port. At the end of the year the king advised the Archduke Albert, his new governor general in the Netherlands, that he was equipping a fleet at Lisbon for the invasion of Ireland; he had 12,300 troops and the vessels which had taken refuge in Ferrol; as the enemies of Spain were assembling it was necessary to destroy one before they all united; this one would be England, for 'the English are the most encumbered and the easiest to strike on their own territory'; the governor general was to give his advice, indicating the possibility of concentrating a great army near Calais; then 'with a good squadron of galleys (sic) to escort it, this army could land in England'.[52] Here was a new edition of the old strategy of 1588! An incredulous archduke, who was already convinced that the only answer to Philip II's problems was peace, went through the merest motions of collaboration, and this side of the operation was eventually dropped for lack of men and ships. But in the autumn of 1597, when the English fleet under Essex was absent in the Azores, Philip sent the reinforced second Armada off again. Almost as big as that of 1588, it was striking evidence of the Spanish naval revival; its commanders had experience of English naval tactics, and a detachment of troops from Spanish-occupied Brittany was to co-operate; the destination was Falmouth. As it approached the Channel, simultaneously with the English fleet returning from the Azores, it was hit by a storm from the

[51] See C. Falls, 'España e Irlanda durante el reinado de Isabel de Inglaterra', *Segundo curso superior de metodología y crítica histórica* (Madrid, Estado Mayor Central del Ejército, Servicio Histórico Militar, 1950), pp. 329–54.

[52] Philip II to Archduke Albert, 31 December 1596, Lefèvre, *Correspondance*, iv. 395.

north-east and dispersed. That was the last Armada Philip II sent against England. By this time his resources were stretched to breaking point: for the past two years he had been at war not only with the English and the Dutch but also with France.

3. Intervention in France

Philip II had never really reconciled himself to the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis with France. The Huguenot attack on his communications in Europe and America, fear of the spread of Calvinism into his own dominions, French intervention on behalf of the rebels in the Netherlands, each item increased his distrust and his vigilance. In France, however, he had an asset which he had never had in England—civil war. Until 1589, therefore, his weapons were diplomacy and subversion; as long as France was internally divided, her kings hard pressed to maintain themselves against the Guises and the Huguenots, she could be no real danger to Spain; it was sufficient for Philip to support and subsidise the Catholic forces, as he had done on the eve of the Armada. After the defeat of the Armada, however, Henry III summoned up courage to challenge the domination of the League; in December 1588 he had the Duke of Guise and his brother the Cardinal of Lorraine assassinated. His action only stirred the League to greater efforts and plunged France deeper into civil war. Paris and other League towns took to arms; the Duke of Mayenne, the last survivor of the Guise brothers, assumed direction of the movement; and Henry III was forced to throw himself into the arms of the Duke of Navarre and the Huguenots, and with them to besiege Paris; there, on 1 August 1589, he was assassinated by a young Dominican, Jacques Clément. From then onwards it was open war between the Catholics of the League and the man they would not recognise as king of France, Henry of Navarre.

Philip II too was determined to exclude 'the Béarnais' from the throne of France. If France were united under a Protestant sovereign she could be a real danger to the Spanish Netherlands; Farnese would be isolated between the Dutch and the French, and Italy might be open to invasion. But his ambitions went beyond mere defence of his own possessions; he now had the opportunity to claim the throne of France as son-in-law of Henry II and with it to increase his empire. He therefore strengthened his diplomatic mission in Paris, and in September he ordered Farnese to rest on the defensive in the Netherlands and reduce costs, for to prevent the accession of Navarre he might have to send his troops 'openly into France'. To the vigorous objections of Farnese, who saw his programme in the Netherlands once again about to be sacrificed to the foreign policy of the king and money

he desperately needed wasted on the League, Philip replied 'the question of France is the principal one at the moment'.[53] The Netherlands were now simply a base for the offensive against France, the war against the Dutch a defensive war. In these decisions Philip II had the unanimous support of his Council of State. And in the ultimate analysis he received the agreement of Farnese, though the latter was uneasy about leaving the Dutch unpacified and would have preferred a compromise settlement in his rear. With these misgivings, Farnese sent a small contingent from Flanders to help the League against Henry of Navarre; the combined Catholic forces were defeated at Ivry (14 March 1590), and Henry laid siege to Paris. Philip II then decided to commit his whole army of Flanders under Farnese in open war on Henry. In these months the king was seized with the same feverish zeal which had possessed him in the enterprise of England; again Farnese was sceptical, and this time his disapproval was shared by Idiáquez in Madrid and by many of the Spanish officers in his own army; and again Farnese obeyed. But he determined to confine his operation to one objective—the relief of Paris.

Farnese crossed the frontier in August; with brilliant economy of effort he evaded the enemy forces, got his troops skilfully across the Marne and took Lagny, the only fort blocking the way to Paris from the east; with both banks of the river under his control he was then able to revictual the capital and force Henry to abandon the siege. To supplement Farnese's invasion from the east Philip sent a flotilla and a force of 3,000 troops to the support of the League in Brittany, Now, as his forces had rescued Paris and he had an army in France, he decided the time was ripe openly to press his claims to the French throne on behalf of his daughter Isabella, or in default of this to dictate an acceptable candidate. Farnese did not agree; his political sense told him that the French would not tolerate this kind of intervention in their affairs; his military sense told him that he could not possibly dominate the country with the forces at his disposal; above all he was anxious for the security of the Netherlands, threatened in his absence by a Dutch offensive and an inevitable mutiny of unpaid Spanish troops, further proof of the impossibility of winning on two fronts at once. Against the wishes of the king he took his army back to the Low Countries in November.[54]

There the situation had deteriorated in his absence. As long as Henry of Navarre continued to divert the attention and the resources of Philip II to France, the United Provinces had their best ally to date. Their leader, Maurice of Nassau, son of William of Orange, had seized the opportunity to prepare his offensive, and when Farnese returned with his army depleted

[53] Parker, *Army of Flanders*, pp. 244–5; van der Essen, *op. cit.*, v. 276–81.
[54] *Ibid.*, v. 293–310.

he struck him hard. By June 1591 he had taken Zutphen and Deventer, which in Spanish hands had cut off the north-east from communication with the heart of the rebel republic; in October he took Nimwegen. While Farnese was struggling to contain the rebel offensive, orders reached him from the king in July to abandon at once all military action in the Netherlands and to go again, as quickly as possible, to the help of the League in France. Again there was a struggle of wills, as Farnese tried to make Philip understand the folly of the course he was pursuing. The prospects for the Netherlands, he argued, were alarming: in the first place the king ran the risk of losing them outright to the rebels unless he maintained a large army; secondly, the condition even of the provinces subject to Spain was deteriorating and the royal cause losing its appeal, because to take the offensive in France meant going on the defensive in the Netherlands, which prolonged the war for the royal provinces, ruined their economy, and exposed them at once to the blows of the Dutch and the mutinies of ill-paid Spanish troops.[55]

But Philip was now blind to rational argument, and his original objective, the security of the Netherlands, seemed to be sacrificed to a policy of imperialism in France. In February 1591 his embassy in Paris, staffed by fanatics who fed his ambitions, had managed to get a permanent Spanish garrison into the French capital. Shortly afterwards he sent a small force to aid the League in Languedoc. His troops in Brittany were still operating. All these, however, were piecemeal efforts, too small to win France. He wanted a major invasion by a powerful army. Ideally Languedoc, accessible from Spain itself and a centre of League resistance, was the best point of penetration; but Philip had his reservations about the League position there, and in any case the army he had in Spain was pinned down from 1590 to 1592 by a rebellion in Aragon.[56] An invasion of France from the east by Farnese's army, therefore, was the only alternative, and to get his general to move he made it a test of his loyalty. In December 1591 Farnese crossed the French frontier a second time to revive the waning fortunes of the League and in particular to relieve Rouen, besieged by Navarre and English auxiliaries. His progress was thwarted by the need to haggle with the League leaders over the terms of the Infanta's succession, the price of Philip II's assistance, but eventually, after a frustrating though brilliantly conducted campaign in which he himself was severely wounded, Farnese forced Navarre and his allies to abandon the siege of Rouen. In mid-June he returned to the Netherlands, his forces again depleted and he himself 'more dead than alive'.[57]

Of all the men who served Philip II in high office, Farnese was probably the most honest, straight-speaking, and realistic. Independence of mind,

[55] Lefèvre, *Correspondance*, iii. 585, 594. [56] See below, pp. 361–63.
[57] van der Essen, *op. cit.*, v. 325–55; Lefèvre, *Correspondance*, iv. 34–8.

however, even allied to utter loyalty, was not a quality the king admired in his servants. Since the defeat of the Armada Farnese's credit in Madrid had begun to decline; the king's distrust, fed by the vicious slanders of the general's enemies, especially of the Spanish embassy in Paris, was increased when Farnese frankly opposed his policy in France. From the end of 1591 Philip was determined to remove him; though with a duplicity which could hardly be excused as his usual 'dissimulation', he continued to give him apparent signs of his confidence. In October 1592 Farnese was ordered to lead another expedition into France. On his way there he died at Arras on 3 December, in his forty-seventh year, and still unaware that the king had dismissed him.

With his best general gone, his army diminished, and his League allies slow to fulfil the bargain he had struck with them—that they acknowledge the Infanta as queen of France and call the States General to ratify her succession—Philip's prospects in France were worsening. In desperation he sent a third expedition from the Low Countries in March 1593. He was now applying every pressure he could to get the States General to declare for his daughter or for one of his other candidates, while the French sought to evade his intolerable demands, keep the crown out of foreign hands, and preserve their country from satellite status. The only asset Philip had was that Henry of Navarre was a Protestant. This, too, he lost when Henry declared his intention to be converted and in July 1593 was received into the Catholic church. The Spaniards were mortified and refused to accept his conversion as genuine; in Rome their diplomacy worked frantically to prevent the pope from accepting it; but although it took two years, Henry IV received papal recognition. By that time his position in France was secure. He was crowned king in February 1594, ejected the Spanish garrison from Paris, and made himself master of the capital. His conversion was followed by the gradual rallying of the country to his cause, and Philip II could only watch in helpless frustration as one by one his allies defected or were defeated. But there was still a Spanish force in Marseilles and Brittany, and Henry feared that what Philip II could not get by subversion he might try to win by full-scale war. Therefore, to give notice that civil war had ended and that his cause was a national one, on 17 January 1595 he formally declared war on Philip II, because he had 'dared, under the pretext of religion, openly to try and subvert the loyalty of the French towards their natural Princes and sovereign Lords . . . unjustly and publicly pursuing this noble crown for himself and for his own'. He thus underlined that sovereignty in France was the issue at stake.

In a reckless accumulation of commitments, Philip II had brought himself to war with three powers—England, the United Provinces, and France.

And he was no more capable of defeating his new enemy than he was of reducing his old ones. He occupied some positions encircling France, it is true. But the heart of the country was protected by impenetrable barriers of territory and manpower. Even if he found towns to occupy, consciences to buy, and in one case Protestants ready to sell themselves, it was always on the periphery of France. And in spite of his proximity and his fleet he could not even retain his marginal footholds. Toulouse was lost in 1596, Marseilles in the same year; in Brittany his rebel allies had never been on good terms with the Spanish detachment, and although the latter was still there it carried no particular threat for Henry IV; the attempt of the governor of Milan to penetrate from the south-east was frustrated by Henry's victory at Fontaine-Française in June 1595. In fact, Henry's only real problem, and the only hope for Spain, lay on France's north-eastern frontier. There the army of Flanders still had striking power, and its commanders were not without initiative. Spanish victories in Picardy in the first year of the war checked schemes for co-operation between the French and Dutch armies. Then, when Henry expected a push eastwards towards Paris, the Spaniards suddenly went north, taking Calais completely by surprise and capturing it without difficulty in April 1596. Philip II at last had a Channel port. He was not, however, in a position to use it, for his ambitions had overreached his resources. In the first place, he was now faced by an anti-Spanish alliance. His progress in north-eastern France forced Elizabeth I to overcome her distrust of French objectives in the Netherlands, and in May 1596 she signed a treaty with Henry IV, granting him a loan and a force of 2,000 men, in return for his promise not to conclude a separate peace with Spain; the alliance was also joined by the United Provinces. Moreover, Philip's military position in France was basically insecure; this was demonstrated in 1597 when his army took Amiens but lost it within six months. The problem was one of occupying outposts in enemy territory and holding them by force amidst a hostile population; given the forces at his disposal, the problem was insuperable. Finally, he found it impossible to cope with the Low Countries and France at once, especially as he had just gone through a severe financial crisis leading to the bankruptcy of 1596. Philip II's intervention in France had been extremely expensive: the bulk of the 88 million florins sent to the Netherlands in the 1590's was destined for France. It had also distorted political priorities, postponing indefinitely a possible conclusion to the Dutch struggle.[58]

What possible benefit could Spain expect from the war with France? The question was being asked even by Philip's advisers. While Spain was immobilised in vast continental operations, the real profits of war—trade and

[58] Parker, *Army of Flanders*, p. 247.

maritime expansion—were going to England and the United Provinces. The latter had already profited from the ruin of Antwerp and the decline of the southern Netherlands, and they continued to profit by trading with Spain in spite of Philip's efforts to exclude them from his ports. In the Mediterranean a growing volume of Dutch and English shipping was breaking through Spanish patrols in search of trade and winning increasing returns. In the Atlantic Spain's enemies were still disputing her colonial monopoly. Some of the advice Philip II was receiving showed an awareness of the situation which he himself seemed incapable of understanding. From 1595 the papacy had come out unequivocally on the side of French independence; now, to end a war between two Catholic powers which only benefited the Protestant countries of the north, Rome offered itself as a mediator for a Franco-Spanish peace. From the Low Countries Philip had even more urgent advice. Since 1596 his governor there had been his nephew, the Archduke Albert. Although he had spent all his youth at the Spanish court, was more Spanish than Austrian, and was regarded as safe enough to be made viceroy of Portugal, Albert had not surrendered his independence of judgement and, like Farnese, he was free of the megalomania prevalent at court. From the time he arrived in the Low Countries he sought to extricate Spain from a war against three enemies which immobilised his programme in the Netherlands and dissipated the king's resources. He began to put out feelers in France for peace negotiations. If Philip was now impervious to rational advice, even he could see that he had gained virtually nothing from the war with France, and that peace on this front at least was an essential preliminary to dealing with England and the United Provinces. On the initiative of the Archduke, therefore, peace was concluded with France at Vervins on 2 May 1598. Spain gave up Calais and the other places she held in Picardy and Brittany, and gained little in return. For Henry IV believed that France could not be safe if Spain recovered the northern Netherlands, and he continued to give aid to the United Provinces, scarcely bothering to conceal it. From Vervins, therefore, Philip II did not receive quite the breathing-space he had expected. On the other hand he saved a considerable amount of money, and his army could return to the Netherlands.

For the Netherlands Philip had already decided on his solution. He would marry the Archduke Albert to the Infanta Isabella and make them joint sovereigns of the Low Countries, north and south, with semi-independent status. In September 1597 he began to prepare public opinion by official announcements.[59] From the rebel provinces there was silence; they

[59] Lefèvre, *Correspondance*, iv. 426.

had ceased to regard themselves as subjects of the king of Spain or of the Archduke Albert, and they had power enough to continue their resistance. In the southern provinces, on the other hand, the ruling class seemed to welcome the proposal. In any case Philip went ahead. On 6 May 1598, four days after the conclusion of the peace of Vervins, he signed the instrument making over the Low Countries to the Archduke and the Infanta—they were to be married as soon as possible—to be ruled by them as 'sovereign princes', the settlement to apply to the northern as well as to the southern provinces. But what did this 'sovereignty' mean? Albert and Isabella were certainly not puppet rulers. True, their policy remained a Spanish one, but it was Spanish out of conviction and not necessarily proof of their subordination to the king of Spain or to Spanish interests. Far from being blind executors of orders from Madrid, they often resisted the crown's ministers and sometimes took the initiative in policy, as Albert had done in promoting peace with France and was to do again in negotiating peace with England.[60] Nevertheless, although they were something more than governors general, they were something less than independent sovereigns. The Spanish crown did not renounce its hereditary rights. Unless there was issue of the marriage, the Netherlands would revert to Spain on the death of either Albert or Isabella; in fact there was no issue, and the Netherlands did revert to Spain in 1621. But the crucial test, as usual, was the location of military power. Even after the transfer of 'sovereignty' a Spanish army remained in the Low Countries; it was a composite army, including Belgian as well as Spanish troops, and its commander-in-chief was the Archduke; but its officers were appointed by the king of Spain and to him it was responsible. Denied independence of Spain, the Low Countries were also denied equality with her, for they were specifically excluded from trade with the Indies, a stipulation which could hardly appeal to the Dutch. The Low Countries, then, were not independent: they might have their own administration but they were still part of the Spanish imperial system. The southern provinces accepted their status, but the north continued to resist. Philip II, in fact, could not bring himself to liquidate the entire Netherlands problem by the only realistic method possible—by recognising the facts of division and so relieving Spain of a ruinous war which she could never win. Meanwhile the sheer cost of the war remained a burden for several decades to come. Manpower losses to Castile were not easily measured, nor quickly replaced. The great financial drain continued, especially in the years 1586–1607 and 1621–40. Returns from the Indies were immediately devoured by Flanders. The Castilian national debt rose from 36 million ducats in 1557 to 85 million

[60] Lefèvre, *Spinola et la Belgique, 1601–1627* (Brussels, 1947), pp. 7–8.

in 1598 and was to reach 112 million by 1667.[61] The Spanish also suffered from the war in the Netherlands. The wool trade from northern Castile diminished considerably by the 1590's, and Iberian colonial interests came under increasing attack from the Dutch enemy.

4. Crisis in Aragon

While Philip II's policy was approaching its nemesis abroad, his rule was also being challenged at home. During the crucial years of his intervention in France, between 1590 and 1592, he had been unable to send an army across the Pyrenees because he needed one in Spain itself. In Castile, of course, his sovereign's writ still ran. With Catalonia he had already reached an understanding. But in Aragon he had experienced mounting resistance, and in 1590 this reached critical proportions. His position there had been weak from the very beginning of the reign, as has been seen. Charles V had warned him that he would find it more difficult to govern Aragon than Castile 'because of the nature of its privileges and constitutions, and because its lawlessness, no less prevalent than elsewhere, is more difficult to investigate and to punish'.[62]

The king ruled in Aragon through his viceroy and with the advice of the Council of Aragon. Both viceroys and councillors were royal nominees, but the king was restricted in choosing them by the rule that all offices in Aragon were reserved exclusively to native Aragonese.[63] The composition of the Council, it is true, was diluted more to royal taste by the fact that Catalans and Valencians had rights of representation there, and the treasurer-general could be a Castilian. Moreover, the right to have a native viceroy was not absolute, though for many years Philip II, with his great respect for regional susceptibilities, behaved as though it was. But in any case while the king had his executive, Aragon had its cortes, and these possessed specific legislative and financial powers and the right to appoint a permanent watch-dog committee. And apart from administration, the king was frustrated by a whole network of local laws and legal practices. The king's justice in Aragon was administered by the Audiencia of Zaragoza, but this was not the only court in Aragon. Royal jurisdiction was challenged by that of another tribunal, the court of the Justicia; this consisted of five members appointed by the crown and sixteen nominated by the Aragonese cortes, and was headed by a magistrate, the Justicia of Aragon, who was nominally appointed

[61] Parker, *Spain and the Netherlands*, p. 188.
[62] Quoted in Marañón, *Antonio Pérez*, ii. 481. See above, pp. 209–10.
[63] Riba, *El Consejo Supremo de Aragón en el reinado de Felipe II*, pp. xxx., 90, 116–17.

by the crown for life but whose office was in fact hereditary in a single family, in the sixteenth century the Lanuzas. The Justicia exercised civil and criminal jurisdiction in certain cases, especially those between the crown and the nobility. He also had power to intervene in the proceedings of royal tribunals and officials, either by the process known as *manifestación*, which consisted in taking the person of any accused who claimed to be threatened with violence and putting him in the protective custody of the Justicia's prison while the case was being heard by competent judges, or by issuing *firmas* (letters) to anyone seeking remedy against alleged injustice at the hands of royal officials, the recipient thus obtaining complete immunity from royal power while his allegations were being investigated.[64] These, then, were the *fueros*, or charter rights, of Aragon, and the only tribunal against which they had no validity was the Inquisition.

The 'liberties' of Aragon, however, were not popular or democratic ones. Some of the legal devices were open to serious abuse and tended to make the kingdom a refuge for criminal elements. Above all, they shielded an archaic social structure. Behind these legal barriers lurked a feudalism more primitive than anywhere else in western Europe. For this reason their most fanatical defenders were the nobles of the kingdom, who formed two of the four estates into which the Aragonese cortes were divided, and monopolised land and office.

The independence of the great magnates was tempered by respect for the person of the monarch and regard for the opportunities available if they co-operated with him. But the lower ranks of the nobility, in a country which was not rich, were more extreme in their separatism and more intransigent in their championing of the *fueros*, partly out of resentment of their practical—though not legal—exclusion from the offices and wealth available to Castilians and a consequent desire to keep Aragon for the Aragonese, partly because, as in the case of the great magnates, feudal jurisdiction was at stake. A large part of the peasantry never came into contact with royal officials; their primary obedience was to the lord whose vassals they were and whose feudal power made him their political ruler as well as their economic oppressor; seigneurial officials ruled them and took their feudal dues and services, and seigneurial courts tried them; some Aragonese lords even had the right to strangle their vassals without appeal. The *fueros*, then, worked to the advantage of the ruling class, not of the mass of the people. As the latter did not feel the weight of royal power so they had no reason to oppose it. On the contrary, they sought to escape from the tyranny of their lords by seeking the protection of royal jurisdiction, and

[64] *Ibid.*, pp. xxxiii., 67–71.

in this way the desire of the peasants to see the estates on which they lived incorporated in the crown coincided with the anxiety of the crown to make its sovereignty effective.

Yet for much of his reign, Philip II's preoccupation with other problems, his preference for ruling Aragon from a distance through his representatives there, and his genuine respect for existing law, confined him to encouraging the efforts of the rural populations to transfer themselves from seigneurial to royal jurisdiction and encouraging inter-marriage between the Aragonese nobility and that of Castile in order to further the process of integration. But it was a slow and frustrating process, as Philip knew from one notorious case. The county of Ribagorza, extending north from Monzón to the Pyrenees, and containing seventeen towns, 200 villages and some 4,000 vassals, was too large and too close to France to be allowed to preserve its archaic immunity indefinitely. For over thirty years, and in the face of adverse judgements from the Justicia and the cortes, Philip struggled to wrest it from the jurisdiction of its lord, the Duke of Villahermosa, and incorporate it in the crown.[65] His only assets were the duke's rebellious vassals and the tenacity of the treasurer-general of Aragon, the Count of Chinchón, a Castilian whose hatred of the Aragonese nobility stemmed precisely from a family feud with Villahermosa. Eventually, after tacitly sanctioning outright rebellion by the duke's vassals, Philip forced him to surrender his territories in 1591 in return for a money indemnity. In its mountain remoteness and proximity to France, its anarchy and its family feuds, Ribagorza was a microcosm of Aragon. It was also a lesson to the Aragonese. Observing the treatment of Villahermosa, the nobility and gentry began to fear for their immunities, and raised the usual cry that the *fueros* were in danger.

But Philip was increasing his pressure. At the beginning of 1588, believing the time had come to assert his authority and end the insubordination of the Aragonese, he decided to appoint a viceroy who was not a native of the country, obsessed with *fueros* and tied to local interests.[66] So he sent the Marquis of Almenara, of the great Castilian house of Mendoza, to oust the existing viceroy, the Count of Sástago. The choice was unfortunate, for Almenara, as well as being a tactless and pompous man, was also a friend and relative of Chinchón. Above all, he would be a 'foreign viceroy'. Supporters of the *fueros* claimed that by law all royal officials in Aragon should be Aragonese. Whether the rule extended to viceroys was not clear; even the jurists were divided on the issue, and Philip was probably right in believing that he had the right to appoint a Castilian, as his predecessors

[65] *Ibid.*, pp. lii.–lxv.

[66] *Ibid.*, pp. lxxii.–lxxvii., 26–32.

Ferdinand and Charles had certainly done. In any case he himself was a stickler for the law, and he wanted his right acknowledged in Aragon, not by force, but in the Justicia's court. The time, however, was inopportune: the question of the foreign viceroy, topping that of seigneurial jurisdiction, induced a sense of crisis. Almenara had *fueros* flung at him from every side; virtually ostracised, his house set on fire, he returned in humiliation to Castile to report to the king. Philip then removed the Count of Sástago and replaced him by Andrés Simeno, the bishop of Teruel, an Aragonese but a minor figure, easy to manipulate and obviously a stop-gap appointment. When Almenara returned in the spring of 1590, with increased emoluments and powers, it was clear that the king intended him to exercise authority in Aragon, with the viceregal title, provided he could have its validity confirmed in the Justicia's court. As the situation approached a climax, a new factor entered when Antonio Pérez, in flight from Castile, arrived in Zaragoza and claimed the protection of the *fueros*.

Since his arrest in July 1579 Pérez had found the net around him closing more tightly.[67] As the king himself was implicated in the murder of Escobedo and wanted to get his hands on the compromising documents in Pérez's possession he had to proceed against his former secretary with caution. First he was allowed to move around Madrid, while the secret investigation into his conduct slowly proceeded. Then, when one of the assassins spoke and the Escobedos and their allies at court pressed their accusations, he was arrested a second time in January 1585, though to distract public attention the case against him was confined to charges of trading in offices and state secrets; on these he was found guilty and sentenced to two years' imprisonment and an enormous fine.[68] On the other hand the judges could not get him to give up his papers. By this time, however, Philip II was searching for more than documents; he was also seeking peace of mind over Escobedo's murder, his own acquiescence in which was now public knowledge. Therefore, to expiate his own guilt and to make it clear that the real responsibility lay with Pérez, who had misled him about Don John and Escobedo, Philip put him on trial a second time. In January 1590 the royal prosecutor informed Pérez that the king admitted knowing that he had had Escobedo killed, but for his conscience' sake he must know whether the causes given him for the action were adequate.[69] At first Pérez blandly denied all complicity in the murder, but under torture he weakened and produced some causes for Escobedo's death. These, however, were merely vague references to his bad influence on Don John; they contained nothing of gravity and no proof. The revelation was fatal to him. As he had no proof of any subversion on

[67] See above, pp. 322–24.
[68] Marañón, *op. cit.*, i. 416–48.
[69] *Ibid.*, i. 462–76.

the part of Don John, and therefore nothing to incriminate Escobedo, the king could now believe he had been misled and that the responsibility for the crime was not his but that of Pérez, who had deluded him with falsehoods. Now Pérez could be eliminated in strict justice, and his threat to use state secrets removed once and for all. Pérez himself realised how desperate his situation was. He decided to take to flight. He already had contacts in Aragon who were probably holding his documents for him. In April 1590, with the help of his wife, he escaped from his prison in Madrid and fled eastwards to the land of the *fueros*. As he crossed the frontier, the story goes, he knelt and kissed the ground, crying 'Aragon! Aragon!' Soon he was in the protective custody of the Justicia's prison, 'the prison of liberty' as it was called.

He had chosen his moment well. In Aragon, defence of the *fueros* was then the leading issue and regionalist sentiment was ready for any pretext to resist the crown. There Pérez had supporters, the Duke of Villahermosa and the Count of Aranda among the magnates, and many more in the lower ranks of the nobility, including Diego de Heredia, Martín de Lanuza, and Juan de Luna, all violent feudalists. And in Aragon Pérez was in a country hostile to Castile, close to Béarn and France; with him he had documents which might be damaging, if not to the king's interests, certainly to his reputation. Philip II had to act quickly. In Madrid Pérez was condemned to death in his absence. In Aragon the king entered a formal plea against him before the Justicia's court on charges that the defendant had compassed the murder of Escobedo on false pretences, divulged state secrets, and escaped from prison. But the lengthy judicial proceedings only gave Pérez the opportunity to publicise his views, especially that he had ordered the murder of Escobedo at the king's command, while Philip was thwarted by the slowness and partiality of the Aragonese judges. To stop Pérez from making further capital from the case, and in the conviction that the verdict would be an acquittal, Philip withdrew his charges. He then turned to the one tribunal in Spain against which the *fueros* of Aragon and the authority of the Justicia were of no avail, and whose trials were conducted in secrecy —the Inquisition. Pérez, of course, was no heretic, but on the flimsiest of evidence, furnished obediently and with grotesque distortion by the king's confessor, Diego de Chaves, a case was made on which the Inquisition could act, and in May 1591 Pérez was quietly removed from the prison of the Justicia into that of the Inquisition. His partisans, led by Heredia, then organised a riot in Zaragoza, during the course of which the mob attacked Almenara, who subsequently died of his wounds, rushed the prison of the unpopular Inquisition, and rescued their new idol to deposit him back in the Justicia's prison. From there he conducted his propaganda, attacking the court and the Inquisition, urging the people to defend their liberties even

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with arms, and showing a rare talent in organising a resistance movement. It was at this time that plans were discussed among the pro-Pérez party to separate Aragon from the Spanish crown and make it into a republic, perhaps under the protection of the Prince of Béarn, Henry of Navarre.[70] In government circles it was feared that 'another Flanders' was being prepared in Aragon.

Among whom did Pérez find his supporters? Not by this time among the magnates, who were alarmed by the turn of events, though the attitude of Villahermosa and Aranda remained ambiguous. Some Aragonese seem to have supported his cause out of a genuine belief in the 'liberties' of Aragon, others understandably because the offices they held—from that of Justicia downwards—depended upon the maintenance of the *fueros*, of which Pérez had become a symbol. But most of his supporters came from the minor nobility and gentry, the so-called 'knights of liberty', who were fighting for their feudal power against royal encroachment or out of frustration at their exclusion from office and prospects in a Spain dominated by Castile.[71] Their leader was Diego de Heredia, who boasted that he had twice availed himself of his right to strangle a vassal, and who was as ready to turn his violent and lawless instincts against the crown as against his own tenants. The feudal nature of the movement, of course, prevented it from having a mass appeal. The peasants had nothing to gain from resisting the king or defending the *fueros*, and Pérez's propaganda found no response in the countryside. Its impact was mainly confined to Zaragoza, the centre of regional government, and a place where a mob could be mobilised. This was seen when the king attempted to have Pérez returned to the Inquisition prison on the 14 September. Again Heredia and his retainers moved into action, scattering the royal guard, and placing Pérez at liberty. The rebels then made themselves masters of the town, persuaded the youthful Justicia, Juan de Lanuza, and the *Diputación del Reyno* to give them formal support, and warned the king that to send a Castilian army into Aragon would be a breach of the *fueros*. Caught between supporting the crown or joining the rebels, magnates and moderates opted for the former. Outside Zaragoza most of the towns also declared for the king. The narrow basis of the movement was now clear for all to see; equally evident was the strength of the king's position.

On the frontier of Aragon Philip II had already assembled an army of 12,000 under Alonso de Vargas, a veteran of the Low Countries; now, as legal negotiations had failed, he decided to use it. At the end of October Vargas led his forces into Aragon without encountering opposition. As they approched Zaragoza resistance within the town disintegrated; Pérez and

[70] *Ibid.*, ii. 551–59.

[71] *Ibid.*, ii. 559–62.

his associates took flight to Béarn, while the Justicia and the 'constitutional' wing of the rebels sought a temporary refuge in Epila. Retribution was rapid and ruthless. The Justicia was taken and executed; many more suffered the same fate; Villahermosa and Aranda were sent to Castile where they died mysteriously in prison; and the Inquisition began to seek out its attackers. From Béarn, Pérez and the émigrés organised a petty invasion which Henry of Navarre sanctioned simply in order to embarrass Philip II in Spain and relieve his pressure on France. But the puny force of rebels and their Protestant allies who crossed the Pyrenees in February 1592 were routed by Vargas and resisted by the local Aragonese, many of whom were vassals of the émigré leaders and all of whom closed their ranks against a Protestant and foreign invasion. The invaders were pursued into France where Heredia was captured and brought back to be executed. As for Pérez, after selling himself, though ineffectually, to France and England, he spent his last years in Paris, an exile without influence and without money; he died in 1611, unpardoned by the Spanish crown.

In contrast to the severity of the repression, the subsequent political settlement was moderate. Aragon could not be expected to preserve its constitution unchanged. In 1588, absolute monarch though he was, Philip had been willing to put his case before the Justicia's court and to seek its sanction for the right to appoint a Castilian viceroy. Now, with an army of occupation in Aragon, he had the country and its institutions at his mercy. He also knew that Aragon was isolated, for the rebels had failed in their attempt to draw Catalonia and Valencia to their cause, and their failure underlined the absence of any feeling of political unity among the eastern kingdoms.[72] The occasion was a perfect test for his principles of government. He had power enough to destroy the *fueros* of Aragon, if he so wished. Yet nothing was further from his thoughts. To give Spain a centralised constitution he would also have had to abolish the immunities of Catalonia and Valencia, and they had given him no reason to do this; even the mass of the Aragonese had eventually rallied to his cause and assisted his army to repel the invasion from Béarn. In any case, Philip II's respect for the traditional structure of Spain and his adherence to a pluralist conception of monarchy prevented him from reducing Aragon to Castile and removing its political identity. And, like his predecessors, he appreciated that he would not add substantially to his power if he did so.

The Aragonese cortes were summoned to Tarazona in June 1592 in order that the changes contemplated should be given legal form. Their agenda was decided in advance by the crown, and the archaic practice requiring

[72] On the attitude of Catalonia see Reglá, *Felip II i Catalunya*, pp. 209–10.

absolute unanimity of votes in each of the estates was abolished for the principle of majority vote. None of Aragon's institutions were suppressed, but they were remodelled to meet the requirements of royal power. The king was given the right to nominate a 'foreign viceroy', and Aragon was thus brought into line with the other constituent kingdoms. Those members of the two aristocratic estates of the cortes who had not reached the age of twenty years were deprived of their right to vote, though not of their right to attend. The *Diputación del Reyno*, the permanent committee of the cortes, lost a large measure of its control over the use of Aragonese revenue and over the regional guard, and forfeited its right to call together representatives of the cities of the kingdom. The Justicia now became removable at the crown's pleasure; in this way the king undermined the independence of the office and the family monopoly which had been established over it for so long. The nomination of the members of the Justicia's court was also arranged to put it under the control of the crown, and the Aragonese legal system had many of its anachronisms removed. Finally, to strengthen the hand of the central government, Philip buttressed the power of the institution which projected his authority most effectively outside Castile. He had already used the Inquisition as a political weapon against Pérez and against the rebels; now he used it as a means of royal control afterwards. In December 1593 he removed the army but, against the advice even of the Inquisitor general, Cardinal Quiroga, he placed the Aragonese Inquisition in the newly fortified palace of the Aljafería, and protected it with a royal garrison.[73]

Much of Philip II's programme in Aragon consisted of genuine reform, and was a long overdue attack on the privileges of the feudal nobility. It was also aimed, of course, at removing obstacles to the sovereignty of the crown, though even here it was hardly the action of a tyrant, for the *fueros* had been the privilege of the ruling class, and the tyranny that was felt in Aragon was the tyranny of local lords, not of the central power. As it was, the reform was political, not social, in intent; the nobles still had their estates and their vassals, and to reduce their seigneurial power was a longer and slower process.

5. Recession

By 1595 the ravages of age and overwork were telling on Philip. Political blows he regarded as part of his sovereign's condition, and he was inured

[73] Boyd, *Cardinal Quiroga*, pp. 92–93, 96–100; on the political settlement see Merriman, *op. cit.*, iv. 595–99.

to them; but now he was afflicted with an increasingly painful blood disease which reduced him to a shadow of his former self. He continued to follow his relentless routine of work, and survived periodic crises in his health, until in June 1598, during a particularly violent illness, he went to the Escorial to prepare for his death. In the Escorial he had spent countless hours alone at his desk, remote from human companionship, but, now that the end approached, carefully and in all sincerity he surrounded himself with his family, his clergy, and his courtiers, as though he wished to demonstrate how a Christian king should die. He continued to transact some business of state, but above all he prepared himself for death, confessing his sins, receiving Communion, and praying with the priests at his bedside. And in the little room from which he could look out on the altar of the great monastic church, he died at daybreak on the morning of 13 September 1598, in his seventy-first year.

The reign had lasted almost half a century, and Spain necessarily bore the impress of Philip's rule for some time to come. He had completed the unity of the peninsula and perfected its constitution, finely balancing the needs of sovereignty and the susceptibilities of the regions in a system of government which combined absolutism and devolution. Whatever else he did for Spaniards he knew how to govern them. And however disastrous his policy was in Europe, he had maintained Spain's military machine, revived her navy, and preserved intact the greatest source of her power, her empire in America; in the last years of his reign the flow of treasure was as secure as it had ever been.

Nevertheless Philip II left Spain on the edge of a crisis, for the economic foundations of her power were even more fragile than they had been at the beginning of the reign, and his government had done nothing to improve them. Life was hard for Spaniards in the 1590's. After the unremitting price rise of the greater part of the century there was an additional spurt of inflation at the end which dealt another blow to living conditions. The price of grain rose by more than 50 per cent. in Castile and Andalucía between 1595 and 1599. Prolonged neglect of agriculture and growing reliance on foreign grain, the supply of which was more precarious during wartime, culminated in a food shortage which left the country on the verge of famine. The situation of the consumer was worsened by the intolerable weight of taxation, as the government sought to compensate for its own difficulties from inflation and to pay for its foreign wars. Producers were also hit by inflation and taxation, and even more businesses were now liquidated, as merchants and industrialists sought to escape from the risks of productive enterprise and from the social stigma of working for a living, to join the ranks of the nobility. Disaster was not complete, and for the moment Spain was saved from the

consequences of her own folly by the money she earned in America. Thanks to the imperial defences provided by Philip II the colonial revenue continued to inject some life into the economy of the mother country. But this income was not invested productively, and therefore it continued to cause inflation. Moreover, it could not go on for ever; to rely exclusively on colonial resources was to invite disaster once those resources diminished. But no one looked to the future, least of all the government. The enormous expenditure of the state, the luxury spending of the aristocracy and the ruling class, the anxiety of all Spaniards to live on rents and annuities, pointed unmistakably to the fact that Spaniards really did believe that wealth lay only in money and in the interest from money. As the economist González de Cellorigo remarked in 1600, Spain had been reduced to a state where men lived 'outside the natural order'.[74] The day of reckoning was still to come, though it was only a decade or two away; once colonial trade declined, the decline of Spain itself began. Meanwhile, the inertia of the government and the mentality of the ruling class fostered the two basic conditions which prepared the way—absence of production, and social stagnation.

As long as Spain fought the kind of wars to which Philip II committed her, economic revival was impossible. The entire reign was given to warfare on one front or another, for many years on two fronts at once—the Mediterranean and the Netherlands—and in the 1590's on three fronts at once—the Netherlands, England, and France. Spain was the only power in sixteenth-century Europe capable of sustaining such an effort, but what did it gain her? In the Mediterranean Philip could legitimately claim to be fighting for survival. In the Low Countries he insisted he was merely defending his rightful inheritance, though against the United Provinces the argument was unrealistic. In the Atlantic and the Caribbean he was protecting his country's colonial, and therefore economic, interests. But only in the imagination of the king himself could his war with France be regarded as a defensive war, unless it were conceded that he had to appropriate the whole of Europe in order to defend his interests. In the last fifteen years of his reign Philip proceeded on the assumption that war could gain him any objective he wanted. Yet there was no order of priorities. The greatest source of Spain's power, and the greatest field for her religious and political ideals, was her empire in America. The logical procedure would have been to concentrate her efforts and resources on this front by cutting them elsewhere. As it was, the Netherlands were the biggest and most relentless drain on Spanish resources. Once Philip had placed an army there and committed himself to a campaign

[74] See P. Vilar, 'Le temps du "Quichotte" ', *Europe*, xxxiv. (Paris, 1956), 3–16; and Larraz, *La época del mercantilismo en Castilla*, pp. 72–75.

by land he could never demobilise; year after year the war devoured his men and money and pinned him down in a conflict which, after the recovery of the southern provinces, he could never win. 'The provisioning of Flanders', remarked a Spanish official two years after the death of Philip II, 'has been and is the ruin of Spain. It provokes the hostility of ministers, and the people cry that an end be put to it.'[75]

The cry had been uttered for some time. As Spain's armies and fleets endlessly consumed the nation's resources for increasingly fewer returns, so the spirit of her people moved from confidence to doubt, and to a growing disillusion with grandeur. In the later cortes of the reign dissenting voices were raised, protesting against the mounting taxation and unnecessary wars, and requesting the king to withdraw his armies from the Netherlands and France in order to concentrate on the military and maritime defence of Spain and her American empire. A demand for a new subsidy in 1593 provoked a memorable debate in which deputy after deputy advised the king to go on the defensive and cut his losses. The deputy for Seville, Pedro Tello, a man who had spent the greater part of his life soldiering, urged the king to consider how in spite of many years of warfare he had been unable to overcome Spain's numerous enemies, and 'in the attempt, God knows, Your Majesty has spent his last strength, and is under no obligation to do more'.[76] The cortes, of course, were impotent, but public opinion found an echo in their deliberations. The king himself had learnt some lessons by the end of the reign; the state of his finances forced him to learn something. He tried to disengage from some of the fronts in northern Europe; from the French front he withdrew successfully in 1598; but from the Netherlands he failed to extricate himself, and with England he saw no alternative to war. In any case, it was difficult to liquidate Spain's imperialist past, just as it was difficult to transform her society. Spaniards continued to live 'outside the natural order', and Spain was still tormented by the old illusions of empire, her resources approaching exhaustion, her weapons growing rustier, yet still launching her expeditions abroad. A few years later Cervantes was to give his fellows and his country an immortal name.

[75] Quoted Braudel, *La Méditerranée*, p. 381.
[76] Larraz, *op. cit.*, 149–53.

APPENDIX I

Note on Spanish Currency

The basic Spanish money denomination was the *maravedí*. At the beginning of the modern period Spain's standard gold coin was the *excelente de Granada* issued by Ferdinand and Isabella and usually called the ducat (after the Venetian ducat on which it was modelled). The ducat was 23¾ carats fine and was tariffed at 375 maravedís. In 1537 Charles V substituted for it a new unit known as the *escudo*, 22 carats fine and tariffed at 350 maravedís. The ducat, however, continued to serve as a unit of account. In 1566 Philip II increased the tariff of the *escudo* (weight and fineness remaining constant) from 350 to 400 maravedís, a figure at which it remained for more than forty years.

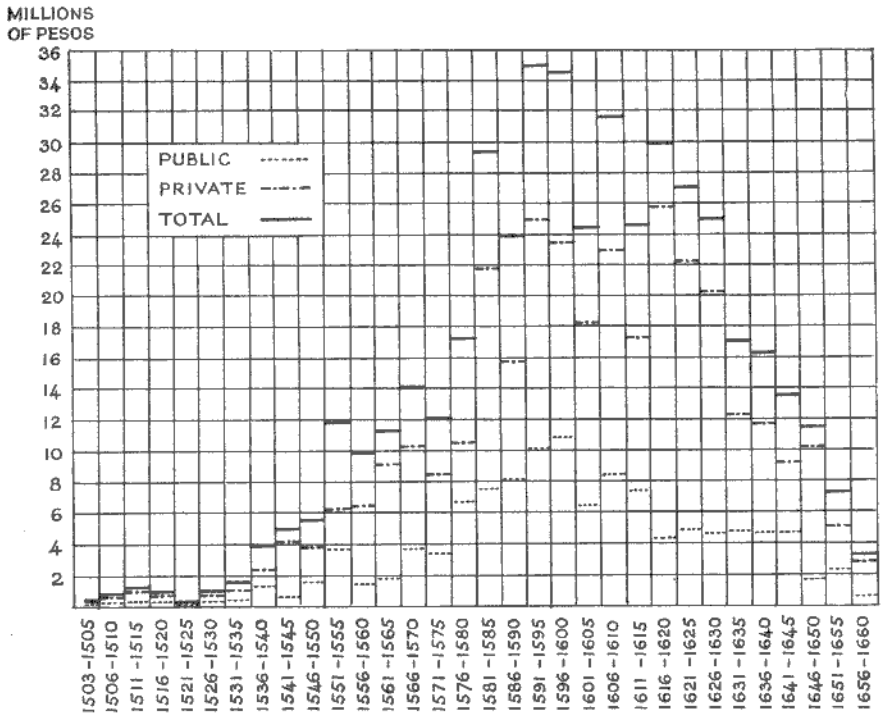
In 1548 Charles V authorised an increased vellon circulation, and in 1552 he reduced the silver content of vellon from 7 to 5½ grains fine. No change occurred in silver money during the reign of Philip II. The standard silver coin in this period was the *real*, which was worth 34 maravedís, the *real de a ocho* being worth 272 maravedís.

Treasure from America was expressed in terms of *pesos*. *Peso* means 450 maravedís' worth of gold and silver. It was equivalent to 42.29 grams of pure silver. For purposes of conversion it is equivalent to 1.2 ducats.

APPENDIX II

TABLE A

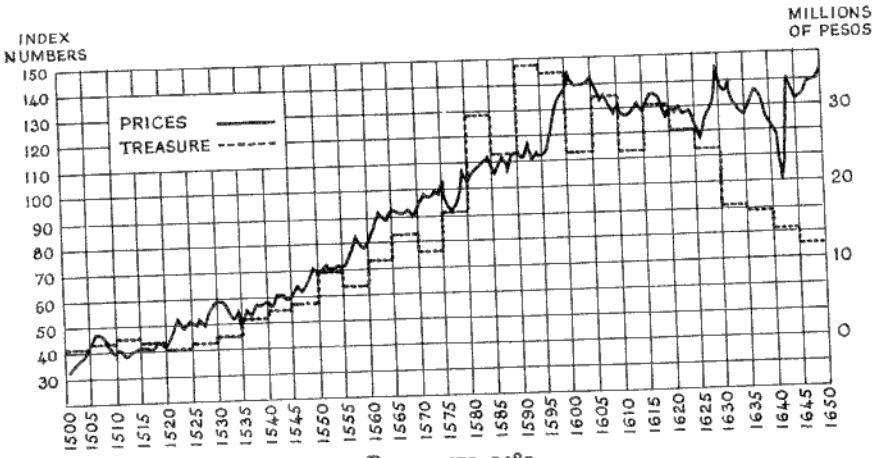
TOTAL IMPORTS OF TREASURE IN PESOS (450 MARAVEDIS) BY FIVE-YEAR PERIODS[1]



[1] Reprinted from E. J. Hamilton, *The American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain 1501-1650* (Harvard University Press, 1934).

Table B

Total Quinquennial Treasure Imports and Composite Index Numbers of Commodity Prices[1]

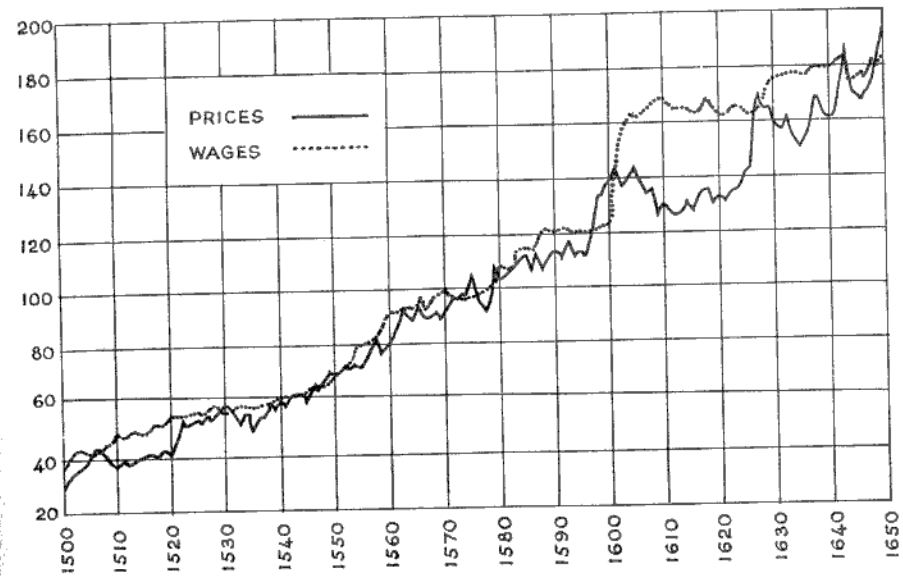


Base = 1571–1580

[1] Reprinted from E. J. Hamilton, *The American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain 1501–1650* (Harvard University Press, 1934).

Table C

Composite Index Numbers of Wages and Prices 1501–1650[1]

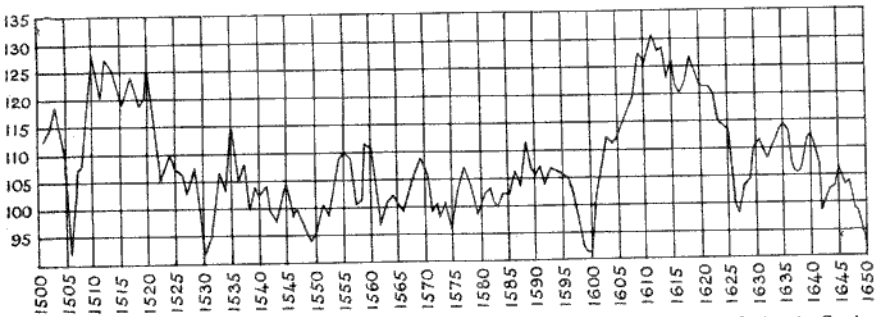


Base = 1571–1580

[1] Reprinted from E. J. Hamilton, *The American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain 1501–1650* (Harvard University Press, 1934).

Table D

Composite Index Numbers of Real Wages[1]



[1] Reprinted from E. J. Hamilton, *The American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain 1501–1650* (Harvard University Press, 1934).

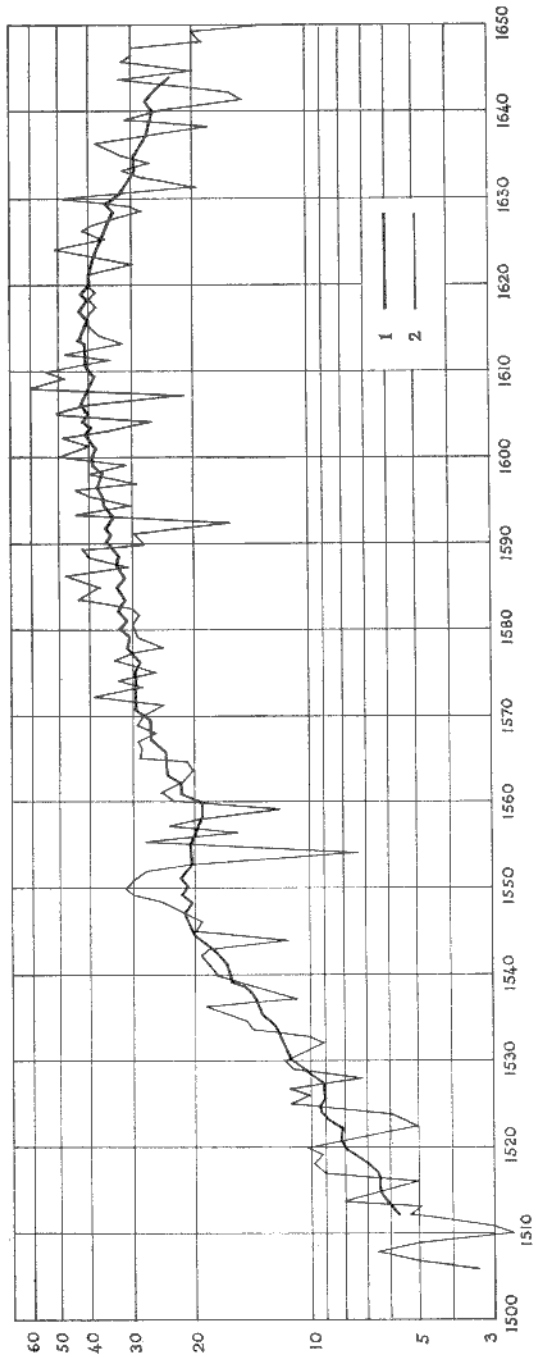
Table E

THE INDIES TRADE. ITS EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION AS SHOWN BY THE TONNAGE OF SHIPPING (OUTBOUND AND INBOUND COMBINED) BETWEEN SPAIN AND AMERICA.[1]

1. Trend, established by means of thirteen-year moving average.
2. Annual tonnage figures.

The figures on the left give tonnage in 1,000's of toneladas. Tonelada had different meanings at different dates, but Chaunu has devised a conversion factor for reducing original data into a standard draft tonnage of 2.83 cubic metres. Tonnage statistics—the carrying capacity of the vessels leaving and returning to Seville—furnish the principal data for measuring the trade cycles. Lacking production statistics, Chaunu assumes that the tonnage of shipping measures general economic activity. The average size of ships in the Indies trade increased steadily: it rose from 70 tons in 1504 to 391 tons in 1641–45. Gross tonnage (outbound and inbound) increased from 15,680 tons in 1506–10 to 273,560 tons in 1606–10.

[1] From Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique* (S.E.V.P.E.N., 1957), vii. 54–55.



BIBLIOGRAPHY OF RECENT WORKS

General

THE study of early modern Spain has advanced in a number of directions in the last fifteen years, not least in the field of social history, and it is fitting that Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, who has given so much to the subject in original research, should also have written distinguished works of synthesis. The first of these, *The Golden Age of Spain 1516–1659* (London, 1971), was a revelation to English readers, and was soon followed by a Spanish version, *Desde Carlos V a la Paz de los Pirineos 1517–1660* (Barcelona, 1974). Yet these have been surpassed by his *El Antiguo Régimen: los Reyes Católicos y los Austrias* (2nd ed., Madrid, 1974), which contains some notable passages on the urban sectors and on the crisis of the seventeenth century, and from which the specialist as well as the general reader will learn. The work of Bartolomé Bennassar, *The Spanish Character. Attitudes and Mentalities from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1979), is of a different kind, the reflections of a historian on the life of Spaniards at home, at prayer and at play, in which the archives themselves are made to speak.

From Golden Age to Depression

The reign of Ferdinand and Isabella still awaits its modern Prescott, though our knowledge is increased by the substantial work of L. Suárez Fernández and Juan de Mata Carriazo, *La España de los Reyes Católicos* (*Historia de España*, ed. R. Menéndez Pidal, 2 vols., Madrid, 1969), and that of Miguel Angel Ladero, *Castilla y la conquista del reino de Granada* (Valladolid, 1967).

Pierre Chaunu, *L'Espagne de Charles V* (2 vols., Paris, 1973) is a mine of information and ideas, and ranges well beyond the reign of Charles V. Manuel Fernández Alvarez, *Charles V. Elected Emperor and Hereditary Ruler* (London, 1975) studies Charles V as a continental ruler but appreciates his Spanish base. The revolt of the *comuneros*, its economic and social setting, its character and its meaning, are explored by Joseph Pérez, *La revolución de las Comunidades de Castilla (1520–1521)* (Madrid, 1977), a basic interpretation first published in French in 1970. The anti-feudal inspiration of the revolt is underlined by Juan Ignacio

Gutiérrez Nieto, *Las Comunidades como movimiento antiseñorial* (Barcelona, 1973), while the contemporary though unrelated movement in Valencia is the subject of Ricardo García Cárcel, *Las Germanías de Valencia* (Barcelona, 1975).

Philip II has a modern biography worthy of the subject by Geoffrey Parker, *Philip II* (London, 1979), a work of research and of revision. The history of Spain's Mediterranean front was not exhausted even by Braudel. A further sector and new sources have been uncovered by Andrew C. Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier. A History of the Sixteenth-Century Ibero-African Frontier* (Chicago, 1978), while the same author in 'The Moriscos: An Ottoman Fifth Column in Sixteenth-Century Spain', *American Historical Review*, 74, 1 (1968), 1–25, demonstrates the relations between moriscos and the Ottoman government, using Turkish sources for the first time. To transfer troops from the Mediterranean to the Netherlands was a problem of logistics as well as of policy, and this aspect of Spain's war effort in northern Europe has been dealt with by Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567–1659* (Cambridge, 1972). The same author has written a new history of the revolt of the Netherlands, *The Dutch Revolt* (London, 1977). He has also placed the revolt in the context of Spain's wider problems in *Spain and the Netherlands, 1559–1659* (London, 1979); here he questions the correlation supposed by Chaunu between the rise and fall of American treasure receipts and the advance and retreat of the Spanish cause in the Netherlands, and he concludes that there was no discernible reduction in the provisions sent to the Low Countries before 1642–43, when it was the revolt of the Catalans rather than the exhaustion of Castile which caused resources to be diverted from the north.

Spain's policy in northern Europe and determination to establish her sea power between the peninsula and the Netherlands and beyond into the Baltic are studied in detail and in a sense made more credible by José Alcalá-Zamora y Queipo de Llano, *España, Flandes y el Mar del Norte (1618–1639)* (Barcelona, 1975). Peter Brightwell takes an expert look at the options open to Spain in the Netherlands in 'The Spanish System and the Twelve Years' Truce', *English Historical Review*, 89, 350 (1974), 270–92, and concludes that the decision to renew the war in 1621 was neither rash nor unreasoned. J. I. Israel, 'A Conflict of Empires: Spain and the Netherlands 1618–1648', *Past and Present*, 76 (1977), 34–74, places Spanish policy towards the Netherlands in a wider imperial context. Olivares and his Spain will be given their due history by J. H. Elliott, author of *Imperial Spain 1469–1716* (Pelican edition, London, 1970). Meanwhile the student of the period is well served by *Memoriales*

y Cartas del Conde Duque de Olivares. Tomo 1. Política Interior: 1621 a 1627, ed. John H. Elliott and José F. de la Peña (Madrid, 1978).

The reign of Charles II is now immeasurably better known thanks to the pioneering work of Henry Kamen, *Spain in the Later Seventeenth Century 1665–1700* (London, 1980), which brings order out of confusion and fills the void between the Golden Age and the Enlightenment. The story which he tells is not one of decline but of recovery from the mid-century depression; population growth, industrial development in the periphery, agricultural expansion in Castile, and a return to better days in the American trade, these were the signs of a sure if slow revival. Some of these views were anticipated in the same author's study 'The Decline of Spain: A Historical Myth?', *Past and Present*, 81 (1978), 24–50, where he prefers to speak not of decline but of increased dependency and underdevelopment. The argument is part of a renewed interest in Spain's great depression, in which historians have sought to clarify the data and refine their analysis. Students and experts alike will profit from the following: J. H. Elliott, 'Self-Perception and Decline in Early Seventeenth-Century Spain', *Past and Present*, 74 (1977), 41–61; Charles Jago, 'The "Crisis of the Aristocracy" in Seventeenth-Century Castile', *Past and Present*, 84 (1979), 60–90, R. A. Stradling, 'Seventeenth Century Spain: Decline or Survival?', *European Studies Review*, 9, 2 (1979), 157–94, and items by Israel and TePaske mentioned below.

Economy and Society

Population figures, now firmly based, can be found in the appropriate chapters of Jordi Nadal, *La población española (siglos xvi a xx)* (3rd ed., Barcelona, 1973), the standard work. On the epidemic disaster of 1596–1602 more specific data and analysis than were hitherto available are to be found in Bartolomé Bennassar, *Recherches sur les grandes épidémies dans le Nord de l'Espagne à la fin du XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1969). For a history of the moriscos, with a more precise estimate of their numbers, see Antonio Domínguez Ortiz and Bernard Vincent, *Historia de los moriscos* (Madrid, 1978), which sums up the results of research since the work of Halperin Donghi, Caro Baroja and Lapeyre in the 1950s and adds new data of its own.

The researches of Antonio Domínguez Ortiz on Spanish Society in the seventeenth century, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII* (2 vols., Madrid, 1963–70) are basic to the subject, and students will find a useful concise version in *Las clases privilegiadas en la España del Antiguo Régimen* (Madrid, 1973). Charles Jago, 'The Influence of Debt on the Relations

between Crown and Aristocracy in Seventeenth-Century Castile', *Economic History Review*, 26 (1973), 218–36, studies the aristocracy's service to and rewards from the crown. The subject of Richard L. Kagan, *Students and Society in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore, 1974) is the university system of Habsburg Spain, its rôle in society, its response to the demands of the state; the author shows that in late sixteenth-century Castile there were 20,000 university students in a population of 6.9 million, and about 3.2 per cent of all males aged 15 to 24 attended university each year, a high level in contemporary Europe and a reserve of recruits for an imperial bureaucracy.

The trend towards regional studies has brought new areas of knowledge into economic and social history. Bartolomé Bennassar, *Valladolid au Siècle d'Or* (Paris, 1967) led the way with a total study of life and work in this important area of Old Castile in the sixteenth century. A rare study of an industrial centre has been undertaken by Angel García Sanz, *Desarrollo y crisis del Antiguo Régimen en Castilla la Vieja. Economía y sociedad en tierras de Segovia, 1500–1814* (Madrid, 1977), while the regional history of New Castile is well served by Carla Rahn Phillips, *Ciudad Real, 1500–1750: Growth, Crisis, and Readjustment in the Spanish Economy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979). The society of Seville, centre of a regional economy and gateway to an empire, has been studied in two works by Ruth Pike, *Enterprise and Adventure. The Genoese in Seville and the Opening of the New World* (Ithaca, 1966), and *Aristocrats and Traders: Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca, 1972). The *Historia de Sevilla* edited by Francisco Morales Padrón has two admirable volumes for the early modern period, *La Ciudad del Quinientos* (Seville, 1977) by the editor himself, and *El Barroco y la Ilustración* (Seville, 1976) by Antonio Domínguez Ortiz and Francisco Aguilar Piñal. Modern historiography has also been at work on eastern Spain. James Casey, *The Kingdom of Valencia in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1979) shows in masterly fashion that the revival of Valencia after the expulsion of the moriscos and other adversities was slow and incomplete. Two works by Sebastian García Martínez deal with problems of law and order in their social context: *Bandolerismo, piratería y control de moriscos en Valencia durante el reinado de Felipe II* (Valencia, 1977), and *Valencia bajo Carlos II: Bandolerismo, revindicaciones agrarias y servicios a la monarquía* (Valencia, 1974). The neighbouring province of Murcia has been placed on the map of Spanish history by Francisco Chacón in his recent researches on the province; like James Casey he finds little evidence of any revival in the seventeenth century. Catalonia perhaps offers a different example, and Pere Molas, *Comerçi*

estructura social a Catalunya i Valencia als segles XVII i XVIII (Barcelona, 1977), continues the search begun by Pierre Vilar for the origins of Catalan development.

Government and Administration

The institutions of Habsburg Spain were paradoxically neglected by traditional history, and we still await monographic studies of the cortes, the *corregidores*, and the municipalities, not to mention a number of the councils. Fortunately progress has recently been made in some areas of government. I. A. A. Thompson, *War and Government in Habsburg Spain* (London, 1976) detects, between 1560 and 1620, a steady retreat from the attempts of Philip II to nationalise military industries and their administration; under pressure of war, and its cost, his successors had to concede their private ownership. While the presence of the state was receding in one direction, in other respects absolute monarchy was increasing its effectiveness. The office of secretary is the subject of a large history by José Antonio Escudero, *Los Secretarios de Estado y del Despacho (1474–1724)* (4 vols., Madrid, 1969). A. W. Lovett, *Philip II and Mateo Vázquez de Leca: the Government of Spain (1572–1592)* (Geneva, 1977) not only increases our knowledge of the working of the bureaucracy, financial administration and the new juntas, but also shows the development of policy during the secretaryship of Mateo Vázquez. Spanish financial administration under Philip II is described in detail by Modesto Ulloa, *La Hacienda Real de Castilla en el reinado de Felipe II* (2nd ed., Madrid, 1977). Political and social ideas have a perceptive historian in José Antonio Maravall, *Estado moderno y mentalidad social (siglos XV a XVII)* (2 vols., Madrid, 1972).

Religion

The ecclesiastical history of Spain in the early modern period has not made fundamental advance in the last fifteen years, though particular aspects have been well studied. The religious policy of the Catholic Monarchs is a particular concern of Tarsicio de Azcona, *Isabel la Católica* (Madrid, 1964). Relations between church and state under Philip II have been described in more detail by J. I. Tellechea Idígoras, *El arzobispo Carranza y su tiempo* (Madrid, 1968) and José Luis Novalín, *El Inquisidor General Fernando de Valdés* (Oviedo, 1968). For a useful work of reference see *Diccionario de Historia Eclesiástica de España*, ed. Q. Aldea, T. Marín and J. Vives (4 vols., Madrid, 1972).

The study of the Spanish Inquisition has been transformed in recent

years. The starting point is Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition* (London, 1965), which places the subject in a firmer structural and historical framework than hitherto. The two books of Ricardo García Cárcel, *Orígenes de la Inquisición española. El tribunal de Valencia, 1478–1530* (Barcelona, 1976) and *Herejía y sociedad en el siglo XVI. La Inquisición en Valencia 1530–1609* (Barcelona, 1980) are the fruit of basic new research into the religious, institutional, economic and social history of the Inquisition, and bring an element of measurement into the study of a particular tribunal. These are also the qualities, on a different scale, of the work of Bartolomé Bennassar, *L'Inquisition espagnole (xv^e–xix^e siècle)* (Paris, 1979).

Spanish America

Conquest and empire in the context of intellectual history is the subject of J. H. Elliott, *The Old World and the New 1492–1650* (Cambridge, 1970), which brings new understanding of the ideas involved in the European discovery of America and the American discovery of Europe. It is still difficult to measure precisely Spanish emigration to America in the early modern period, but the discussion of sources and methods is brought expertly up to date by Magnus Mörner, 'La emigración española al Nuevo Mundo antes de 1810. Un informe del estado de la investigación', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, 32 (1975), 43–131. The regional distribution of migration is established by Peter Boyd-Bowman, 'Patterns of Spanish Emigration to the Indies until 1600', *HAHR*, 56, 4 (1976), 580–604. Trade between Spain and America is known in great detail up to 1650, thanks to the work of Chaunu, and from 1717 (with a backward glance to 1680) in the more recent work of Antonio García-Baquero González, *Cádiz y el Atlántico (1717–1778)* (2 vols., Seville, 1976). The gap between these dates is now beginning to be filled, with positive results and suggestions even that collapse may have been followed by revival in the last decades of the seventeenth century. Firmer quantities were first suggested by Michel Morineau, 'D'Amsterdam à Séville: De quelle réalité l'histoire des prix est'elle le miroir?', *Annales*, 23, 1 (1968), 178–205, and 'Gazettes hollandaises et trèsors americaines', *Anuario de Historia Económica y Social*, 2 (1969), 289–361, 3 (1970), 139–209. Further evidence was supplied by John Everaert, 'Le commerce colonial de la "Nation Flamande" à Cadix sous Charles II (Ca. 1670–1700)', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, 28 (1971), 139–51. These estimates are based mainly on foreign and non-official sources. Results from the Spanish sources for the period after 1650 are now available through the meticulous research of Lutgardo García

Fuentes, *El comercio español con América, 1650–1700* (Seville, 1980), a work which describes, measures and analyses the Indies trade, its shipping and tonnage, exports, imports and bullion returns. The author argues in favour of an upward turn from the 1670's, although the official sources and his own statistics appear to confirm the existence of a dominant downward trend throughout the period. For a further judgement see A. García-Baquero González, 'Andalucía y los problemas de la carrera de Indias en la crisis del siglo XVII', Coloquio de Historia de Andalucía, 1980.

Demographic history takes a major step forward in the work of Sherburne F. Cook and Woodrow Borah, *Essays in Population History* (3 vols., Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1974–79). The authors return to the problem of Indian population figures, on the basis of previous totals established for Central Mexico: 1518, 25·2 million; 1532, 16·8; 1568, 2·65; 1605, 1·075. They now take the discussion a stage further by considering various dates and estimates recently made by historians for the low point of Indian population in the seventeenth century, especially the date 1650 and the figure of under 1 million. From a revenue list of 1646 they compute a total of 702,929, and place the low point in 1620–25, when the Indian population of Central Mexico was approximately 3 per cent. of its size at the time the Europeans first landed. See *Essays*, iii, 1–102.

The colonial mining industry has emerged into the light of history in recent years. P. J. Bakewell, *Silver Mining and Society in Colonial Mexico: Zacatecas 1546–1700* (Cambridge, 1971) established new frontiers of knowledge and a new chronology of crisis in the seventeenth century. D. A. Brading and Harry E. Cross, 'Colonial Silver Mining: Mexico and Peru', *HAHR*, 52 4 (1972), 545–79, is an essay in comparative mining history and also suggests a new chronology of mining cycles. Knowledge of colonial Mexico has also been advanced by regional studies; see particularly William B. Taylor, *Landlord and Peasant in Colonial Oaxaca* (Stanford, 1972), and the same author's *Drinking, Homicide, and Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages* (Stanford, 1979). New research on the social structure of seventeenth-century Mexico and its significance for the imperial bureaucracy is contributed by J. I. Israel, *Race, Class and Politics in Colonial Mexico* (Oxford, 1975), and the same author participates in a more general debate with his 'Mexico and the General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century', *Past and Present*, 63 (1974), 33–57. He argues that there was a prolonged Mexican depression after 1620, in mining, inter-colonial trade, and industry, and that sustained tax returns were an index not of economic activity but of increased fiscal pressure from Spain, accompanied by a campaign against corruption; all this led to political conflict in seventeenth-century Mexico, and in particular to a rift between officials and colonists in 1620–64. Evidence for depression in another colony is provided by Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America. A Socioeconomic History, 1520–1720* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1973), forgotten by Spain perhaps but, after this, not by historians.

Seventeenth-century Peru is also difficult to assess; there, as in Mexico, signs of promise and of prejudice existed side by side. The mining industry underwent slow rather than catastrophic recession. Peter J. Bakewell has again accomplished important work of measurement, 'Registered Silver Production in the Potosí District, 1550–1735', *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, 12 (1975), 67–103; see also his *Antonio López de Quiroga (industrial minero del Potosí colonial)* (Potosí, 1973). The society of Upper Peru has been studied in a work of research and rare perception by Josep M. Barnadas, *Charcas. Orígenes históricos de una sociedad colonial* (La Paz, 1973). The agrarian history of colonial Peru is very much clarified by Robert G. Keith, *Conquest and Agrarian Change: the Emergence of the Hacienda System on the Peruvian Coast* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976). Peru, too, is part of the evidence for or against the existence of an absolute depression in Spanish America in the seventeenth century, and perhaps of a general crisis in the Hispanic world. Recent quantitative research appears to support the idea of change rather than depression, and to suggest a later date for this: John J. TePaske and Herbert S. Klein, 'The Seventeenth Century Depression in the Spanish Empire: Myth or Reality' (Paper presented to the American Historical Association, 1976). To cite only their evidence from Peru: total income recorded at the Lima treasury office, 1600–90, shows that income levels remained relatively stable until 1664, when serious recession began; annual revenues ranged between 2 and 4 million ducats, with cyclical fluctuations; from 1664 income began an uneven descent lasting into the eighteenth century. No doubt the discussion will continue. Meanwhile historians can now take account of yet another colony whose early modern history has been re-written from the archives: Germán Colmenares, *Historia económica y social de Colombia, 1537–1719* (2nd ed., Medellín, 1975).

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INDEX

Guides to works used and to further reading are provided in the footnotes of each chapter, and in the Bibliography of Recent Works. The following index contains the names of authors. The number after a name refers to the page where, in a footnote, the author's work is first mentioned and given a full citation. Where the entry is followed by two or more numbers, these refer to other works by the same author. There are three indispensable bibliographies of Spanish history: B. Sánchez Alonso, *Fuentes de la historia española e hispano americana* (3rd edn., 3 vols., Madrid, 1952); *Indice histórico español*, Universidad de Barcelona, Centro de Estudios Históricos Internacionales (Barcelona, 1953–); and *Handbook of Latin American Studies* (Harvard University Press, 1936–50; University of Florida Press, 1951–).

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Spain under the Habsburgs

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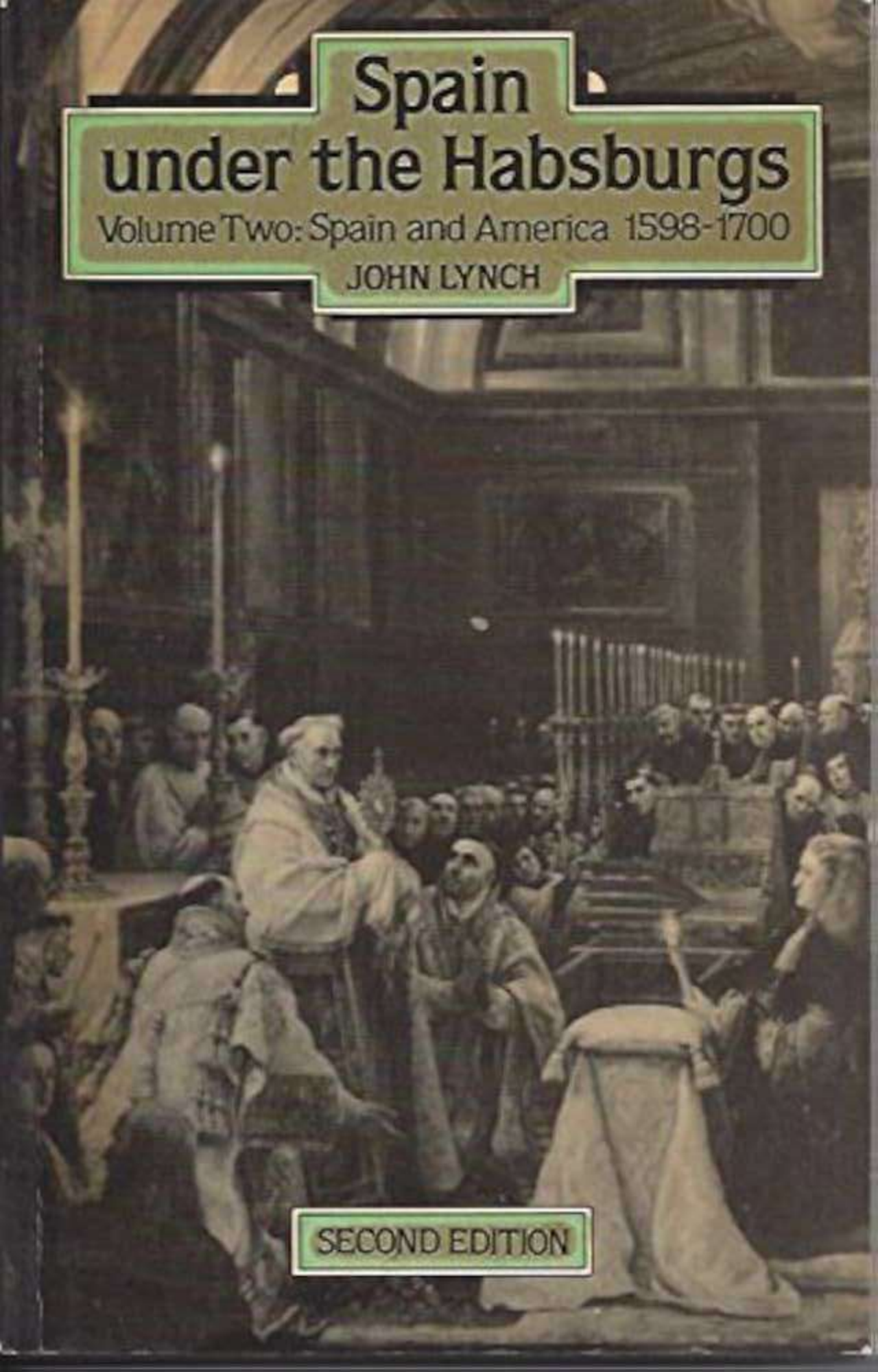
JOHN LYNCH



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Professor John Lynch is the Director of the Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London. He has published widely on Spanish and Latin American history.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE present edition differs from the first in a number of ways. Recent research has extended our knowledge and improved our understanding of early modern Spain, and I have sought to incorporate the results in the new text. Sections of both volumes have been re-written in the light of works published between 1965 and 1980, in some cases to add new material, in others to modify an argument or revise an interpretation. Yet I have not wished to alter the essential framework and character of the book, if that were possible, nor have I changed the hypotheses and speculations which were inherent in it and which belong to the unfinished debate on the rise and fall of Habsburg Spain. I have added a bibliography of recent works, describing the trends in the historiography of the subject in the last fifteen years and indicating the most important advances which have been made. Most of the maps have been re-drawn, and there is a new selection of illustrations.

INSTITUTE OF LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

J.L.

CHAPTER I

THE HISPANIC WORLD IN 1600

SPANISH society and economy were built on the twin foundations of land and silver, Castilian agriculture and American mining. The conspicuous luxury of court and aristocracy, the palaces and the mansions, the Baroque splendour of the church, the complex apparatus of bureaucratic government, the fleets and the armies that spanned Europe and the wider world, the entire fabric of this aristocratic society and the power of its empire were supported ultimately on the backs of Castilian peasants and American Indians. The nobles, as well as the crown, drew their wealth from both sources, for in addition to the vast estates and the numerous vassals working for them in Castile, they also primed their fortunes with lucrative viceroyalties and other earnings in the Indies.

These two pillars of Spanish society were interdependent. In the hey-day of empire Castilian agriculture provisioned the Indies fleets and supplied the colonists with grain, oil and wine. And the mineral wealth of America, directly or indirectly, took some of the pressure off the peasants of Castile and lightened their tax burden. In the years around 1600, however, the imperial relationship was profoundly transformed. The changing economies of Mexico and Peru now required not agricultural products but manufactured goods, which Spain was not equipped to supply. Diminishing trade returns, together with recession in silver mining and retention of capital in American hands for local investment, all combined to reduce the yield of empire, and ultimately to shift the burden of responsibility towards the peasants of Castile, as the crown demanded greater sacrifices from its taxpayers, and landlords from their vassals.

Spain was a rural society and land was the source of peninsular wealth. The numerous and growing towns, not being centres of industrial production, were essentially parasitic growths on an agrarian economy. Most people who actually worked lived in the countryside, and their horizons were bounded by the next harvest. But abundant harvests would stimulate other sectors of the national life, and in their wake taxes would be paid, lords and clerics would receive their rents and urban rentiers their interest, artisans would have employment and merchants something to sell. Conversely, if the crops failed,

or agriculture became depressed, then the whole nation suffered, from the king downwards. So everyone watched the weather and the work force with acute personal interest, an interest turning to alarm as they noticed the first signs of rural distress. Towards 1575–80 Castile began to experience a reversal of the demographic trend, and by 1600 depopulation was notorious. The primary cause was rural migration, which peasants attributed to 'lack of land'; some of them went to the Indies; others, following the trail of the *hidalgos*, sought their El Dorado in neighbouring towns or in Madrid. 'Lack of land' was a complex phenomenon, but one feature was clear enough —the peasants were losing their commons. The great territorial magnates, the nobles and the church, increasingly encroached on common land as they rounded off their estates, sometimes to increase their grain production in a period of rising prices, sometimes simply for the sake of social prestige.

For one reason or another, many peasants were forced out of agriculture. As the village of Taracena in the province of Guadalajara reported in the late 1570's,

> numbers here have diminished, because many *hidalgos* and *caballeros* have gone to live in the nearby city, although they have their estates in the countryside. The farmers who remain in the village have very little substance; poverty has forced many of them to leave for Guadalajara and Madrid, for the village is so destitute that there is no livelihood in it. The majority of its people are now landless labourers, and some of these are leaving for Guadalajara.[1]

Urban growth, rural depopulation, this was the sombre picture of Castile in the years around 1600.

At a primitive level these agricultural communities were self-sufficient. In New Castile the dominant products were cereals and wine; for a period these crops managed to win the battle for land against the claims of livestock, and they accounted for 70–80 per cent. of agricultural production.[2] Local artisan manufactures, some of them practised by unemployed peasants, supplied the simple needs of farms and villages—coarse textiles, leather, pottery and building materials, soap and candles. There was little surplus capital for more sophisticated consumer goods. Most of the peasants did not own the land they worked: they were tenants or seasonal labourers. And they themselves were 'owned' by great lords, lay and clerical, who possessed *señorío*, conferring rights of service, taxation and jurisdiction over their vassals. The Castilian peasant was closely martialled by seigneurial controls, and these spread their

[1] Quoted by Noël Salomon, *La campagne de Nouvelle Castille à la fin du XVI^e siècle d'après les Relaciones topográficas* (Paris, 1964), p. 48.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 96.

net more widely in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Infatuation with noble status, abdication of responsible government, and royal penury, these were the pressures which swept aside the barriers against seigneurial advance erected by Philip II and gradually covered the Castilian countryside with a network of feudalism. Ministers and favourites began a mad scramble for vassals. The duke of Lerma, favourite of Philip III, used his political influence unashamedly to amass *señoríos*. Already before 1600 he owned many townships and villages; at the peak of his power he acquired many more, and in 1611–12 alone he bought a further twelve. Philip IV's financial needs were still more pressing, and he alienated jurisdiction on an even greater scale. In 1625 the crown concluded an *asiento* with a group of bankers, who advanced 1,210,000 ducats to the treasury against the security of 20,000 vassals; these were regarded as property, the sale of which would guarantee the advance. To alienate jurisdiction on this scale the crown needed the formal agreement of the cortes; the size of the transaction disturbed the assembly and it was reluctant to give its sanction. Eventually, to secure agreement, the royal spokesmen had to pull out all the stops of patriotic and religious appeal,

> considering the great and urgent needs of His Majesty caused by the unavoidable expense involved in the capture of Breda, the recovery of Brazil, the provision of the great armed forces maintained by land and sea, and the forces in the Low Countries which are defending the Holy Catholic Faith and the king's patrimony against the assaults of the rebels.[3]

The efforts of the early Habsburgs to curtail and reclaim private jurisdiction were nullified, and the years around 1600 saw a 'feudal reaction', as tens of thousands of Castilian peasants passed from royal to aristocratic control, with harsher taxes, exactions and justice.[4]

Having lost their land and their freedom to the great magnates, the peasants also lost their income, for they were now more vulnerable to service exactions and financial pressure. The Castilian labourer became a beast of burden bearing on his shoulders the whole top-heavy structure of an aristocratic society, church and state, nobles and rentiers, merchants and bankers. The cortes of Castile, by no means a commoner's institution, described in 1573 how one of the basic taxes, the *alcabala* (sales tax), operated in the case of grain:

> The prelates, grandees, lords of vassals and nobles procure all the grain which the peasants produce but do not pay a thing in *alcabala*; the prelates

[3] *Actas de las Cortes de Castilla*, 1563–1632 (51 vols., Madrid, 1861–1929), xliii, 125.
[4] See F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris, 1949), p. 635, who refers to a 'seigneurial reaction', dating it from an earlier period.

because they are exempt; the grandees and lords of vassals because normally they do not pay this tax but charge it on their wretched vassals; and other nobles because most of them employ similar methods in their villages and estates to divert the tax from themselves. The whole burden therefore falls on the peasants who are unable to escape payment on any grain they sell.[5]

As the cortes of 1593 pointed out, the peculiar tax structure of Castile made the peasants 'the people who sustain this kingdom'.[6] It was their labour which supported Spanish government and society, financed the armies and fleets, and subsidised the allies. In 1600 the distinguished lawyer and *arbitrista* Martín González de Cellorigo argued that the whole social and economic structure of Spain rested on the peasants, 'for the peasant who works in the field has to support himself, his lord, the clergy, the money-lender, and all the others who batten on him'.[7]

What were the various charges which crushed the rural masses? First there was the visible token of their vassalage, payments in money, in kind and in services to their lords. These varied from region to region, and in Castile they were not so oppressive as in Aragon and Valencia, but they were still heavy enough. Even more extortionate was the tithe owed to the church and charged on grain, livestock and other agricultural products. In New Castile the tithe took ten or twenty times more of a peasant's income than did seigneurial payments, and it was impossible to evade or reform, for the church had acknowledged rights to the fruits of the earth, enforced with all the rigour of canon law and spiritual sanctions. The tithe, it is true, financed the pastoral, social and educational work of the church, as well as its more extravagant consumption. But for the peasant it was a nightmare.

In addition to the regular visits of bailiffs and tithe commissioners, the peasant also endured the attentions of the royal tax-collectors, charging *alcabalas*, *servicios* and, from the late sixteenth century, the *millones*, a new tax on basic foodstuffs. Many *arbitristas* considered this the last straw. According to Sancho de Moncada, professor in the University of Toledo, the *millones* took 'the drop of wine from the mouth of the needy farmer, the morsel of meat and oil from the poor widow'.[8] But having paid his taxes, the peasant still had to find the rent he owed his landlord. In New Castile this was even more exacting than the tithe, taking between one-third and one-half of the value of crops produced.[9] Between rent and tithe the peasant was trapped,

[5] *Actas de las Cortes de Castilla*, vi, 369.
[6] *Ibid.*, xii, 505.
[7] *Memorial de la política necesaria y útil restauración de la República de España* (1600), quoted by Salomon, *op. cit.*, p. 214. The *arbitristas* were literally 'projectors' of schemes of financial and economic reform, but they may be regarded as the political economists of the time.
[8] *Fin y extinción del servicio de millones* (Madrid, 1619), fols. 41–41v.
[9] Salomon, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

and the only escape was migration. González de Cellorigo, writing in 1600, regarded rent as the greatest cause of rural distress and the prostration of the Castilian peasants, 'for having paid the tithes owed to God, they pay an even greater amount to the owner of land; and then follow innumerable seigneurial obligations, impositions, payment of debts and dues; and finally the various state taxes to which they are subjected'.[10] Altogether more than half of a peasant's product was consumed in payments which enriched non-peasant classes. On the remainder he had to keep his family, defray his overheads, pay his labourers, and renew his equipment.[11] Is it surprising that he was forced to cut down on production or abandon the land, seeking release from a standard of living which had become intolerable?

The structure of rural society was rigid, a harsh reflection of prevailing values.[12] At the bottom were the *jornaleros*, the landless labourers, who formed more than half the rural population of New Castile and lived more like beasts than human beings, in mud or wooden huts, with no furniture and few belongings, the whole family sleeping on the earth floor. The *jornaleros* were seasonal labourers, moving from place to place in search of work and bread, and in the intervals turning their hands to some rough craft or begging for charity. Above them were the *labradores*, peasant farmers who had actual possession of land by ownership or more commonly on lease. In New Castile they formed 25–30 per cent. of the rural population, and most of them were wretchedly poor, their joyless lives containing few hopes. A farmer was rich if he had 1,000 ducats a year, and perhaps some of them had, but they were a small minority, no more than 5 per cent. of rural inhabitants. These were the only dynamic group among the peasants and they fought to preserve their modest fortunes in the midst of rural crisis, looking down on the *jornaleros* below and resenting the *hidalgos* above. But they were not agents of change, for they themselves aspired to *hidalgo* status and in some cases secured it. So the one vigorous element in the countryside worked not to dissolve the social structure but to reinforce it. As for the *hidalgos* themselves, some were proud and destitute, others were reduced to working for a living, and all of them worked hard at maintaining their tax immunity, if only formally. But the *hidalgos* came well behind the *caballeros* and *títulos* in land, income, and prestige; these were the greatest proprietors, the real landed aristocracy.

The defects of the agrarian structure were becoming more pronounced towards the end of the sixteenth century. Land, jurisdiction, and tax immunity gave the aristocracy a monopoly of power in the countryside, while

[10] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 245.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 250.
[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 257–302.

the peasant, more vulnerable than ever before, joined a growing exodus to the towns. This was the first cause of rural depopulation. But these overcrowded towns became death-traps of another kind.

In the years around 1600 Spain was struck by devastating disease, the first wave of a repeated assault which decimated the Spanish people and from which no generation of the seventeenth century escaped. The first great bubonic plague entered through Santander in 1596 and spread westwards along the northern coastal provinces, leaving heavy mortality in its wake. About 1598 it penetrated central Spain and began to feed on the two Castiles. In 1599 it reached Andalucía, and in Seville alone claimed 8,000 victims. It is difficult to calculate the total casualties of this prolonged scourge, but they amounted perhaps to 500,000.[13] There was a direct connection between rural depression and the high mortality of these plague-ridden years. Masses of distressed peasantry, already suffering from acute malnutrition, were easy victims of epidemic disease.[14] Once contagion had taken root agriculture further deteriorated, for the labour force was weakened and diminished. As for the densely packed towns, they were particular foci of infection, which shortage of food supplies then prolonged. Coastal districts were open to relief, for emergency supplies could be rushed in by sea. But the heartland of Castile, at the mercy of a slow and inefficient transport system, was isolated from the outer world. Its enclosed rural communities depended on their own agricultural resources, and to them the coincidence of famine and plague brought disaster—and panic. As towns were placed under quarantine, movement of the meagre food supplies available became even more difficult. And it was the urban poor, living in unsanitary slums and shanty towns, who suffered most; while the wealthy could escape to their country houses and isolate themselves behind armed guards, the poor had no refuge and if they fled from the towns they were driven off from country villages at gunpoint.

The great plague of 1596–1602, a precursor of other lethal epidemics, inaugurated a century of demographic recession. A decade later, inspired with a kind of death wish, Spanish society purged itself of impurity and expelled the moriscos, the last remnants of Islam in the peninsula. These two amputations deprived Castile of some 600,000 to 700,000 people, about one-tenth of its population, within the short period of 1596–1614. Spain bore the scars for many decades to come. According to González de Cellorigo, 'the loss of the strength, valour and greatness of Spain' was due to the 'lack of people which

[13] Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII* (Madrid, 1963), pp. 68–70. The prolific writings of this distinguished historian, full of research and understanding as they are, have made him one of the greatest authorities on the Spanish seventeenth century; this book is particularly indebted to his works.

[14] J. Nadal and E. Giralt, *La population catalane de 1553 à 1717* (Paris, 1960), discusses the relation between famine and pestilence.

has become apparent in recent years'. This lack was particularly noticeable in the Castilian plain watered by the River Duero, a region which included Valladolid, Burgos and Medina del Campo; but the provinces of Toledo and Seville were not far behind. And there was no respite. The years 1630–32 were particularly harsh, with a crushing combination of crop failure, famine and plague. In 1632 the cortes lamented:

> Many people have died, and many have abandoned their houses and farms, with great loss to agriculture. Livestock is scarce, savings are consumed, and many villages are so destitute that they ought to be relieved of their burdens rather than be asked for more to contribute to the needs of other kingdoms.[15]

But plague and depopulation had secondary consequences, for they disrupted trade and business, and labour shortage inflated wages to an unprecedented level.

Demoralised by death and destruction, the people of Castile were further castigated in these years by a rampant rise in the cost of living. After a century of relentless inflation prices suddenly spiralled beyond all control. In Andalucía the price of grain rose from 430 maravedis a fanega in 1595 to 1,041 in 1598, in Castile from 408 in 1595 to 908 in 1599.[16] The price revolution culminated in 1601 when prices reached their peak. Thereafter, inflation did not cease, in spite of demographic recession and the precipitous fall of silver receipts from America; now it was caused by the progressive depreciation of base money, especially from the early 1620's. In Andalucía and the two Castiles the average price level showed a downward tendency in 1601–10, and trade, particularly to America, began to recede.[17] Prices then remained stable in 1611–20, with a slight trend upwards. This stability was upset by the enormous coinage of vellon (debased copper coinage) in 1621–25, as the government sought to create quick money for itself. On average the indices rose about 20 per cent. in 1621–30; in 1626–27 Castile experienced one of the most violent price upheavals in its history, its average indices rising 20·21 points in two years.[18] This was caused not by economic activity nor by the American trade—imports of precious metals fell sharply in 1630—but almost exclusively by monetary inflation. There was a further price rise in 1636–38, with an advance of 21·8 points in Old Castile. After a brief fall, prices surged upwards again in 1641–42, owing to the heavy increase in vellon during the wars and revolutions of the early 1640's, but they were brought

[15] *Actas de las Cortes de Castilla*, li, 97.

[16] Earl J. Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, 1501–1650 (Cambridge, Mass., 1934), pp. 215–16.

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 217–21.

[18] Base 1571–80.

down in 1642 by official deflation. This did not last long, and further depreciation of vellon caused another great upswing in Castile in 1646–50, while the rise was aggravated in Andalucía by the great plague of 1648. The average price level in Andalucía, the two Castiles and Valencia was approximately 38·7 per cent. higher in 1650 than in 1625. 'Hence the net advance under the stimulus of vellon inflation in Castile and silver inflation in Valencia in the second quarter of the seventeenth century was not far behind the most violent upheaval of silver prices in any quarter century of the Price Revolution'.[19]

Grains, particularly wheat, were the most important item of consumption of the vast majority of the population and consumed a high percentage of the income of the common people. Until about 1570 there was little divergence between grain prices and those of other commodities. Up to 1650 this still held good for Old Castile and Valencia. But in Andalucía and New Castile grain prices rose much more than those of general commodities in the period 1575–1650. The rise of the New Castilian indices in the first half of the seventeenth century, in spite of demographic recession, was probably due to exports to other parts of Spain and to over-planting of vineyards on wheat land after the steep rise of wine prices in the previous century. And the lag of grain prices in Old Castile behind those of other regions is probably accounted for by depopulation and price control.[20]

The wage rise of the sixteenth century continued into the seventeenth.[21] The demographic reversal caused by the great plague of 1596–1602 led to an abrupt increase of wages; a labourer in Castile who was paid 3,470 maravedis in 1599 received 9,000 in 1603. Under the stimulus of vellon inflation money wages continued to rise from 1626, and the wage index for 1650 exceeded that of 1600 by 47·77 per cent. But a labourer had to buy food and clothing and house his family, and his real earnings were eroded by inflation. In the course of the sixteenth century the purchasing power of labourers suffered by almost 30 per cent. It also suffered in the first half of the seventeenth century. Prices responded much more rapidly than wages to the great depreciation of vellon money in 1622–27, and this disparity caused real wages to drop more than 20 per cent. From then onwards wages never caught up with the steep rise in the cost of living. The index for real wages in 1650 was about 10 per cent. less than in 1645 and considerably under that for 1627. For the labouring masses of Castile, therefore, the inflation induced by vellon debasement was a calamity; it defrauded them of their wages and depressed their already low living standards to the margin of subsistence.

Historians have been tempted to argue that Spain forged its own economic ruin by tolerating the sharp increase of wages in the early seventeenth century,

[19] Hamilton, *op. cit.*, p. 220. [20] *Ibid.*, pp. 241–42. [21] *Ibid.*, pp. 273–82.

especially in the period 1611–20 when real earnings briefly attained a summit. In these years, it is suggested, wages did not lag sufficiently behind prices to allow the accumulation of capital for investment in production.[22] The argument is not convincing. It is unrealistic to suppose that Spain needed a policy of compulsory saving at the expense of depressed labouring groups. Surplus capital already lay in other hands, innocent of useful employment. And there is no evidence to suggest that better industrial profits would have been invested productively. Spanish entrepreneurial and manufacturing groups, few in numbers and low in spirits, thwarted by state policy, war, social values and economic adversity, were already in difficulties by the end of the sixteenth century. And there could be no improvement until the agrarian structure had been remodelled, for the depressed rural sector did not provide a market for consumer goods. The towns themselves, swarming with unemployed or underemployed migrants from the countryside, were simply an extension of rural depression, so they in turn provided little outlet for agricultural expansion.

Towards the end of Philip III's reign the sense of crisis rose to a new pitch. Amidst a chorus of lamentations from officials and economists, from towns and countryside, the crown commissioned the Council of Castile to report on measures needed to revive the ailing economy. In its celebrated *consulta* of 1 February 1619 the Council examined the causes of depopulation and depression, and concluded, among other things, that the 'excessive burdens and contributions' imposed on the people had led to the 'greatest depopulation', for in order not to die of hunger people were forced to emigrate to other regions or overseas.[23] In a gloss on this report, the *arbitrista* Pedro Fernández Navarrete argued that the income from agriculture, the country's basic economic activity, was not sufficient to cover various costs such as taxes, rent to the landowner, and interest payments to money-lenders; in his view, output was falling because the costs of production were too high.[24] A somewhat different opinion was expressed by Sancho de Moncada. Writing in 1619, he dated rapid deterioration as beginning during 'the last four or five years'; this would coincide with the expulsion of the moriscos and the first stage of recession in the American trade. But Moncada did not regard poor harvests as the root cause of depression; following the crop shortages of 1606–7, he argued, production had improved.

[22] See Earl J. Hamilton, 'American Treasure and the Rise of Capitalism, 1500–1700', *Economica*, ix (1929), 338–57.

[23] Angel González Palencia, *La Junta de Reformación*, 1618–1625 (*Archivo Histórico Español*, v, Valladolid, 1932), doc. 4.

[24] *Conservación de Monarquías* (1626) (*Biblioteca de autores españoles*, xxv, Madrid, 1947), pp. 445–47.

> Many parts of Castile and elsewhere are depopulated by the very abundance of crops, and we see grain and grapes remaining to be harvested. The reason is the lack of demand, which arises from the dearth of people and money for buying essentials; for those who remain have no means of earning money to spend on food.[25]

He saw the depression as the inevitable consequence of a diminishing population, excessive import of foreign goods, and a social mentality which inhibited industrial production. Yet a further viewpoint was given by the count of Gondomar, Spanish ambassador to England, who referred to the 'depopulation, poverty and deprivation in contemporary Spain; foreigners proclaim that to travel through our country is more painful than to traverse any other waste land of Europe, for there are no beds, lodgings or meals, on account of the great and oppressive taxes the natives pay'.[26]

Government revenue was heavily compromised by Philip III. He did not create new taxes, but he anticipated revenue by several years and he inaugurated one of the great evils of the century, monetary inflation. From 1618 in particular, to finance Spain's entry into the Thirty Years War, his government debased the currency on a large scale, a practice continued with even less responsibility by Philip IV. Unwilling to reduce expenditure, which was regarded as essential for national defence, or to increase taxation, which would be unpopular, the government persisted in reckless borrowing, until it reached the point of inevitable bankruptcy in 1627. This year was a further stage in the crisis. Castile now staggered under the impact of vellon inflation, diminution of American trade, and a year of poor harvests. In 1628 the Dutch captured the Mexican silver fleet, and hostilities with France pushed up defence expenditure still higher. Adverse weather conditions in the following years caused further crop failures. Emergency grain supplies were desperately sought in the Mediterranean, North Africa and the Baltic; and the few existing stocks were bought up by the powerful and wealthy, while the mass of the people lived next to starvation.[27]

The syndrome of rural poverty, depopulation, financial chaos, and recession of American trade produced Spain's first great crisis in the modern period.[28] The crisis can be dated between 1598 and 1620, and it was a crisis of change, denoting a reversal of the economic trends of the sixteenth century. The worst was still to come. From 1640 political disintegration and military

[25] *Restauración política de España y deseos públicos* (1619), quoted by Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 26–27.

[26] Gondomar to Philip III, 1619, *Documentos inéditos para la historia de España* (New series, 4 vols., Madrid, 1936–45), ii, 131–46.

[27] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 33–34.

[28] See P. Vilar, 'Le temps du "Quichotte" ', *Europe*, xxxiv (1956), 3–16, for an interpretation.

collapse compounded the economic disorder and reduced Spain to absolute depression. And by this time there was no hope of relief from America.

In the sixteenth century the economy of the Hispanic world was an integrated economy. Spain expended men, money and prolonged effort in the colonisation of America and the development of its resources. The annual shiploads of American treasure, therefore, were the returns on an investment —the greatest investment by any country in the sixteenth century—and not the rewards of a parasite. The injection of expanding amounts of silver into the peninsula compensated to some degree for the failings of the domestic economy. These receipts stimulated some sectors such as shipbuilding and, at first, agriculture; they bridged the gap in the balance of payments; they alleviated the tax burden; and they joined the contributions of the Castilian peasantry to maintain the nation's armies and fleets, and to support its war effort in northern Europe. In the years around 1600 the continuing yield of colonial wealth redeemed the poor performance of domestic agriculture and still more of industry by providing capital to buy abroad. But this closely-knit economy was bound to contract when its most fruitful branch began to wither. Between 1606–10 and 1646–50 gross tonnage in the American trade dropped by 60 per cent., from 273,560 tons to 121,308. This long period of recession can be dated from 1609, and the trend was never reversed.[29] No doubt the crisis of the transatlantic trade was aggravated by the attack of foreign enemies and the penetration of foreign interlopers. But its basic cause was the transformation of the colonial economies and the shift of economic power within the Hispanic world.

The American colonies were no longer exclusively orientated towards mining production. The trends of silver output, of course, differed between Mexico and Peru. From 1545 to the mid-1560's Peru disgorged a vast amount of treasure, especially from Potosí. There followed a recession in the late 1560's and early 1570's until the adoption of the *patio*, or amalgamation, process unlocked the lower grade ores and released an immense and rising output. While this was not sustained throughout the seventeenth century, Peru remained a mining economy, more 'colonial' and less developed than Mexico. But Peru, too, had other sources of wealth and these now absorbed more of the colony's capital, leaving a reduced surplus for Spain. Mexico's mining output was more erratic in the sixteenth century until the introduction of mercury amalgamation in 1553. Thereafter silver production rose steadily, though at its peak, in the 1580's and 1590's, it probably amounted to no more than a third or quarter of that of Peru. And from the beginning of the seventeenth century it receded to the point of collapse. The fall in silver

[29] See the references to H. and P. Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique* (1504–1650) (8 vols., Paris, 1955–59), in Chapter VII below.

returns from America, therefore, reflected in some degree the great depression in the mining industry, which was itself a consequence of demographic catastrophe among the Amerindians, labour shortage, technical deficiencies and rising costs. But it was also evidence of the development of the colonial economies, the decrease of their primitive dependence on mining, their exploitation of other sources of wealth, and their retention of capital for local use in administration, defence contracts, public works and private investment. In Mexico the demographic factor alone was sufficient to stimulate a new investment pattern. The simultaneous growth of the white population and decimation of the Indians caused the colonists to overcome shortage of labour and therefore of food supplies by renewed investment in agriculture, to concentrate more on land and less on mining.

Spain was powerless to prevent these developments. Indeed she had necessarily assisted them. In the process of colonisation Spaniards introduced from the peninsula and the Canary Islands the domestic animals, cereals, vegetables and fruits which flourished in the temperate and highland regions of the New World; they also transferred tropical and sub-tropical plants, such as the orange, sugar cane, and later coffee and rice, which took root in the humid and warmer lowlands. Furthermore, a number of plants cultivated by the Amerindians—cacao, cotton and maize—were taken over by the colonists and produced in quantities to become, with sugar, hides and woods, important articles of trade. Towards colonial industry and commerce Spanish policy was at best liberal and at worst too inconsistent to be a serious obstacle. Some American products such as wine—the vine too was transplanted from Spain—expanded into direct competition with Spanish exports, but by the time this was identified as a danger, towards the 1590's, the development could not be reversed. The textile industry was specifically authorised. Mexico produced raw and manufactured silk, and being well endowed with wool had a sizeable cloth industry. Peru also had a textile industry; this became a target of restrictive policy, but too many Peruvian interests were involved to permit its curtailment. While colonial textiles were inferior in quality and could not command the luxury market, they could certainly satisfy the mass market and remove it from Spanish control. Many of the new products were sold outside the colony which produced them; inter-colonial trade developed a buoyancy of its own, independent of the Spanish liaison, and carried by a merchant marine constructed in American shipyards.

Economic shift was accompanied by social change. By 1600 the first generation of American-born Spaniards had taken root and occupied dominant positions as landowners, manufacturers, merchants and capitalists. Mexican-born whites and meztizos now called themselves *criollos* and were conscious of a difference between themselves and peninsula-born Spaniards,

whom they called *gachupines*. They were subjects of the crown, of course, and not basically hostile to Spain, but nor were they closely attached and they would brook no interference with their private interests. The depression of imperial trade and navigation provided favourable conditions for the growth of an independent society, and in the course of the seventeenth century an American aristocracy came into being, an aristocracy of land and large-scale commerce, the guardians of creole interests, whom imperial administrators could not ignore.

The crisis in the transatlantic trade in the years after 1600, therefore, was rooted in economic forces over which Spain had no control. The development of the empire, the new variety of its economic activities, and its growing self-absorption, were all signs that America was detaching itself from peninsular requirements and was no longer content to be a mere provider of precious metals for the metropolis. By the 1640's certain sectors of the American economy—shipbuilding, agriculture, and investment in overseas trade—were far more buoyant than their counterparts in Spain. The economic independence of America, and its superior capital resources, denoted a fundamental shift of balance within the Hispanic world. Economically at least the dominant partner was now America, and America did not share the peninsular and European interests of Spain, nor did it now contribute in any significant degree to Spain's defence needs and foreign policy. If this interpretation is correct, Spain lost her colonial wealth not so much to foreign rivals and interlopers—the familiar heroes or scapegoats according to point of view—as to her own American subjects who now appropriated their own resources for themselves.

The reorientation of the Hispanic world in the years around 1600 has gone largely unnoticed in European historiography.[30] Observers have been so impressed by the waning of Spanish power in Europe that they have tended to see this exclusively in terms of the depression and depopulation within the peninsula, the suicidal foreign policy of Spain's rulers between 1621 and 1658, and the relative improvement in the power of other states. In these terms, however, how can we explain the enduring facts of the case—that an enfeebled metropolis retained its American empire unimpaired for another two centuries, and that the unity of the Hispanic world survived all assaults until 1810? The reason, of course, is that this was still a great complex of wealth and power, though the centre of gravity had moved across the Atlantic. America in effect preserved its own territory, and in addition defended imperial communications. America was now the guardian of empire. This is the story of the seventeenth century—not the waning of the Hispanic world, but the recession of Spain within that world.

[30] Except of course by Chaunu; see below, pp. 212–18.

CHAPTER II

THE GOVERNMENT OF PHILIP III

1. King and Favourite

Philip II died on 13 September 1598, leaving to his son, then aged twenty-one, the government of the largest, the most powerful and the most complex empire in the world. He delivered his charge with some misgivings: 'God, who has given me so many kingdoms, has denied me a son capable of ruling them'. And, referring to the aristocratic friends hovering about the heir to the throne, he confided to his secretary a few days before his death, 'I fear they are going to rule him'.[1]

Ill-endowed in mind and character for his vast responsibilities, regarded by his officials and his subjects with a mixture of indulgence and exasperation, and condemned by later opinion as totally unfit to rule, Philip III put personal monarchy to the severest test it had yet endured.[2] Physically he seemed to have shed the ill-health of his childhood. Short in stature and inclined to stoutness, he was agreeable enough in appearance, with the red hair typical of his dynasty but without the degenerate physiognomy of the later Habsburgs. His education and upbringing had followed conventional lines for an heir to the throne, and he had lived a courtly life in the company of clerical tutors, spiritual advisers, and aristocratic friends. His father had arranged his betrothal, predictably, to a Habsburg cousin, Margaret of Austria, whom he married in Valencia on 18 April 1599; she bore him eight children, five of whom survived infancy, and she died in childbirth in 1611. Benign and pious, he impressed contemporaries for his moral virtues at least. If his court was frivolous and extravagant, it was probably an inevitable reaction to the austerity of Philip II's household. The king himself had no strong interests, except perhaps eating and hunting. He travelled extensively and seemed to prefer country houses, above all the Escorial, to Madrid. But his mind was empty, his will supine. His political ideas were based on a belief in the divine

[1] Modesto Lafuente, *Historia general de España* (30 vols., Madrid, 1850–67), xi, 77–78.

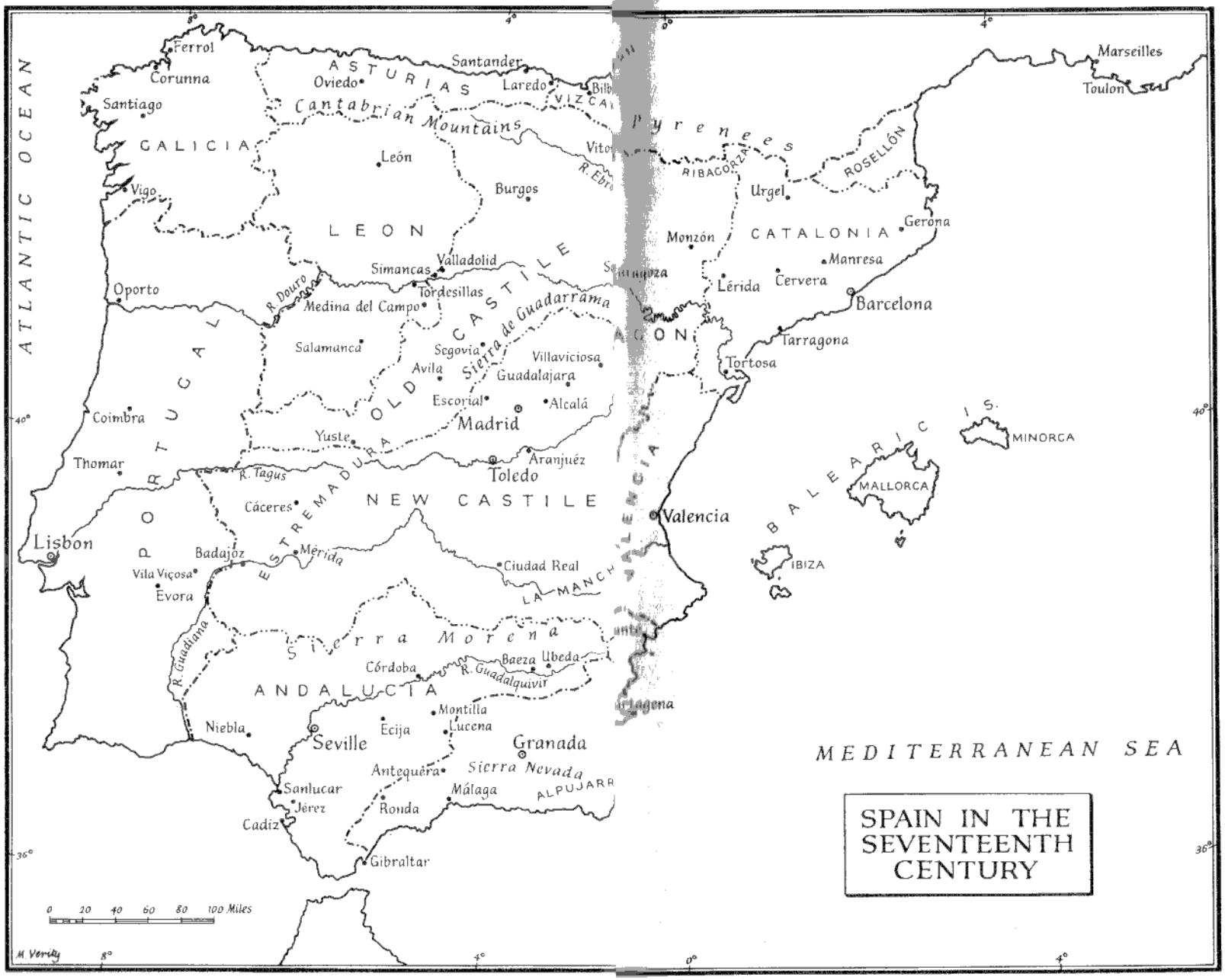
[2] There is no adequate modern study of the reign of Philip III. Ciriaco Pérez Bustamente, *Felipe III. Semblanza de una monarca y perfiles de una privanza* (Madrid, 1950) is a useful source of information though not of analysis. The distinguished works of the nineteenth-century statesman and historian, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, *Historia de la decadencia española* (Madrid, 1854, 2nd ed. 1911) and *Bosquejo histórico de la Casa de Austria* (Madrid, 1869, 2nd ed. 1911) are still valuable for their scholarship and judgment.

mission of Spanish kingship, and he identified the interests of religion with those of Spain, interpreting the vicissitudes of Spanish policy in terms of divine pleasure or displeasure. Otherwise he seemed to view his office primarily as a source of patronage for the Spanish aristocracy. His irresponsible generosity drove his treasury officials to despair, though it was never directed, as far as is known, to cases of real destitution. Even more damaging to the interests of good government, however, was his incurable apathy. Philip III was the laziest king in Spanish history.

The new monarch could not hope to emulate his father. Philip II, as well as being a great king, had been a great civil servant. But his system of government, in which the king was at once his own counsellor, policy-maker and executive, placed an intolerable burden on the incumbent. Philip III at least recognised his own limitations. He took one look at the situation and promptly withdrew. Before doing so he made, for a Spanish monarch, an unprecedented decision: he delegated power to a chief minister. Even in this rare moment of resolution, however, he could not escape his own mediocrity. His choice fell upon Francisco de Sandoval y Rojas, marquis of Denia and soon promoted duke of Lerma, his closest friend and confidant, and a man no more fit to exercise power than he himself was.

Though not a Castilian—he came from Valencia—Lerma was impeccably aristocratic. Indeed his social status and his friendship with the king were his only qualifications for office. Intelligence and judgment he possessed to only a moderate degree. He was also deficient in political experience; he had occupied, without distinction, only one major office, that of viceroy of Valencia, and he had been given this by Philip II not on his merits but in order to remove him from proximity to the impressionable prince. Ranke believed that Lerma possessed qualities verging on statesmanship.[3] And it is true that he consistently advocated a policy of peace and sought to disengage Spain from imperial commitments in northern and central Europe. But these qualities would have been more convincing had Lerma shown any disposition to use peace as a means of reassessing Spanish priorities, of relieving the taxpayer, and of pursuing a policy of retrenchment and reform. As it was he seemed to have little interest in the details of government. In this respect at least he was far from being a precursor of Olivares, the great favourite of Philip IV. Lerma wanted power not in order to make policy but in order to acquire prestige and, above all, wealth. In pursuit of wealth he was active and uninhibited. Beginning his public career in financial difficulties he gradually amassed a vast personal fortune and used his political power shamelessly to

[3] Leopold von Ranke, *L'Espagne sous Charles-Quint, Philippe II et Philippe III* (Paris, 1845), 219–23.



SPAIN IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

sustain and extend it.[4] If Philip III was the laziest ruler Spain has had, Lerma was incomparably the greediest. And his care for his own interests was closely followed by that for his family and friends. He dismissed García de Loaysa, archbishop of Toledo, and Pedro de Portocarrero, inquisitor general, and gave both posts to his uncle Bernardo de Sandoval. He distributed titles and offices to select favourites until he had an entire faction beholden to him. Lerma's venality can hardly be questioned. Whether he had a corrupting influence on Spanish public life is more difficult to determine. The distribution of favours to political clients is one thing; perverting an entire administration is another. It is hardly likely that the hard core of the bureaucracy was affected by Lerma's influence. The Spanish civil service was not so sensitive to change.

The novelty of a weak king and a powerful favourite so impressed contemporary Spaniards that they regarded the year 1598 as the end of an age. Political theorists, too, reacted quickly to the change. In Spain the age of the great political philosophers, like the age of the great kings, had passed. The successors of Vitoria, Soto and Suárez were mediocrities, writers who compiled precepts of moral philosophy for the instruction and edification of the ruler and his ministers.[5] They took for granted that the perfect form of government was personal monarchy; they did not question that sovereignty should be absolute; and it never occurred to them to consider the role of representative institutions. They were looking, indeed, not for the origins and nature of power but for the ideal Christian prince. Their search was appropriate but in vain; Spanish kingship was never so weak as when it was exposed to most exhortation. As though despairing of the monarchs, some political theorists turned to the monarchs' favourites and began to preach on the education, qualities and tactics of the *perfecto privado*. This type of literature reached the depths of bathos in the conclusions drawn by Padre Joseph Laynez: 'If the favourite is as good as he ought to be then he is the noblest and richest gem in the crown of the king'. And as kings rule by divine right so do favourites: 'God chooses the favourite as he does the king'.[6] However preposterous Spanish political theory became in its didactic period, it reflected the view that Spanish kings needed encouragement and their favourites recognition. This in itself was a radical change from the theory and

[4] 'The circumstances of the marquis of Denia are extremely reduced', Mateo Vázquez to Philip II, 12 January 1585, *Correspondencia privada de Felipe II con su secretario Mateo Vázquez*, 1567–1591, ed. C. Riba García, vol. i (Madrid, 1959), p. 351; according to the Venetian ambassador, Lerma was bankrupt in 1598, Simon Contarini, *Relazione* of 1605, in Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, *Relaciones de las cosas sucedidas en la corte de España desde 1599 hasta 1614* (Madrid, 1857), p. 579. On Lerma see also Cánovas, *Decadencia*, p. 60.

[5] J. A. Maravall, *Teoría española del Estado en el siglo XVII* (Madrid, 1944).

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 303–17.

practice of kingship in the reign of Philip II. Later historians, too, have seen the year 1598 as a turning point in the history of Spain, the time when personal rule by the monarch gave way to the rule of favourites.[7]

Yet these developments masked a basic continuity in Spanish history, a continuity of institutions, personnel and policy. This was appreciated by an older tradition of Spanish historiography: 'the truth is that, with less power and less fortune, neither Philip III nor Philip IV professed any other principles of government than Philip II established and practised'; and it has even been claimed that it was not in the *valimiento*, the office of favourite, but in the councils 'in which resided in effect all the political power at that time'.[8] No doubt this is an exaggeration. The formulation of policy is not the same as the exercise of sovereignty. Nor was it the councils in general which formulated basic policy but one council in particular, the Council of State.[9] Nevertheless, in underlining the continuity provided by the administrative machine, these views have a certain validity.

2. Councils and Councillors

Spain continued to be governed by the conciliar apparatus developed by the earlier Habsburgs. In this system power was distributed among a number of agencies which specialised in different aspects of government. But it was not distributed evenly. At the top was the Council of State which considered major policy and had exclusive jurisdiction over foreign policy. This council had no president, as the king was regarded as its convenor. And all the other councils were subordinate, either formally or in practice, to its jurisdiction. It was the parent body of the Council of War, which had begun its career as little more than a specialised sub-committee of the senior council. In the last decades of Philip II's reign, in response to Spain's growing military commitments, the Council of War had acquired its own secretariat and a distinct identity, but it was still basically a subordinate of the Council of State both in function and membership; all the councillors of state were *ex-officio* members of the Council of War, though they did not all necessarily attend it, and its role was simply to administer the military consequences of policy decided in the Council of State.

There was a group of superior or supreme councils, so called because they were theoretically independent of any other. In order of rank these were the Council of Castile, the Council of the Indies, the Council of Aragon, the Council of the Inquisition, the Council of Italy, the Council of Flanders, and

[7] Pérez Bustamente, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

[8] Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, *Estudios del reinado de Felipe IV* (2 vols., Madrid, 1888), i, 258.

[9] Charles Howard Carter, *The Secret Diplomacy of the Habsburgs, 1598–1625* (New York, 1964), pp. 71–72.

the Council of Portugal. Constitutionally 'supreme', in fact they were, to a greater or lesser degree, essentially administrative agencies, applying policy not making it; matters of importance, particularly those affecting defence and security, had to be referred to the Council of State. The Council of Aragon considered the affairs of the three realms of the Crown of Aragon, that is Aragon proper, Catalonia and Valencia. It acted as a liaison between the king in Madrid and his viceroys in Zaragoza, Barcelona and Valencia. Like the other councils in this group it had its own president and secretariat, and a membership which was a mixture of minor nobility and *letrados*; but it also possessed a unique 'constitutional' feature in that all its councillors, with the exception of the treasurer-general, had to be natives of the Crown of Aragon.[10] The Council of Castile had administrative and judicial jurisdiction in the territories of the Crown of Castile alone, and was the nearest Spain approached to a council for home affairs. But even within this specialised field major policy-decisions—the expulsion of the moriscos, for example—had to be referred to the Council of State. The councils specialising in regional affairs outside Castile and Aragon—the Council of Italy, the Council of Flanders, and the Council of Portugal—had an even more humble role. They handled the day-to-day trivia of administration, much of it concerned with applications for pensions and preferment, and any business of importance within their areas went to the Council of State. The Council of the Indies, on the other hand, occupied a more distinguished position in the administrative hierarchy, corresponding to the importance of the overseas empire which it administered. It had competence in every sphere of colonial government, legislative, financial, judicial, military, ecclesiastical and commercial.[11] And so specialised was its function that it was necessarily the major influence in the formation of colonial policy. Nevertheless, in matters concerning imperial defence and security it might have to defer to the Council of State; and its control over Indies revenue and expenditure was severely limited by the general fiscal jurisdiction of the Council of Finance.[12] The latter administered the crown's revenue and expenditure; and although in the field of taxation its jurisdiction was confined to Castile in effect it had international responsibilities, for it was Castile which financed the general policy of the Monarchy. But as this policy was formulated in the Council of State, the Council of Finance was little more than a service department for its superior.

Conciliar government, which was essentially government by committees, was weak in two respects: it provided neither an efficient executive nor

[illegible] *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 3, 11, 54, 192–5, 357–8.

[illegible] Schäfer, *El Consejo real y supremo y de las Indias* (2 vols., Seville, 1935–47) provides an authoritative and detailed study of the Council of the Indies, a task which has not been performed for any other council.

[illegible] *Ibid.*, i, 10.

sufficient centralisation. It was subject, of course, to relentless pressure. Over the vast expanse of the Hispanic world, from the Low Countries to the Philippines, hundreds of officials spent much of their working lives writing reports to the central government, posing problems, requesting advice, demanding action. As wave after wave of paper reached Madrid it was processed according to a procedure which was now fairly standardised. Each conciliar secretary selected and prepared his particular material for the attention of the king; the latter, working with the secretary, decided what the appropriate council should see and requested its opinion; the council discussed the matter and presented its conclusions in a *consulta*, which was a document drawn up by the secretary summarising the various arguments and recording the vote of each councillor; this then went to the king for his decision, a decision which would be returned to the secretary and/or council for action. Before they were subverted by declining standards of appointments in the course of the seventeenth century, the councils themselves and their secretaries worked with reasonable efficiency and despatch. And the *consulta* was a useful instrument for the formulation of policy. The weakness of the system lay in the excessive reliance it placed upon the executive, the king. Too much depended on his personal action. Under Philip II, who worked prodigiously, the machinery was already beginning to creak; under his successors it almost ground to a halt. Delay occurred at two key points: having received the incoming material the king took too long to send it to council for an opinion; and having received the opinion he took too long to act upon it. The efficiency of the subordinate councils in particular was blunted by the evasive tactics of the king in sending their *consultas* to the Council of State for a further *consulta* and even then delaying his decision. The precious decision, once obtained, had to reach a distant agency, or a number of agencies, for actual enforcement. This was the final flaw in the system.

Conciliar government, radiating from the centre though it did, was not really a centralised system of administration. Reflecting to some degree the constitutional structure of the Monarchy, with its semi-autonomous regional components, it could hardly aspire to centralisation. But regional barriers were not the only ones. Madrid was not linked with its outlying provinces by a bureaucracy. Few of the councils—the Inquisition and the Council of the Indies were exceptions—employed their own officials in the localities; liaison between the centre and the periphery hardly penetrated beyond viceregal level. Thus the councils could only govern indirectly. The Council of Finance, for example, which had most need of its own local officials, had to rely for the collection of taxes on tax-farmers who were not responsible to the central government.[13] The regional councils had virtually no full-time

[13] Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV* (Madrid, 1960), 171–80.

administrative officials in the areas under their jurisdiction. Even Castile, within its own boundaries, lacked bureaucratic centralisation.

Philip III inherited these structural defects in Spanish administration and aggravated them by his own habits of work. But his very indolence allowed the councils to assume greater direction of their affairs and to this extent promoted institutional development. This was particularly noticeable in the Council of State. Under Philip II, who did his own work, its powers were limited and its meetings irregular. From about 1600, however, it began to meet regularly—about once a week—and to assume a more active and comprehensive role in the formulation of policy. This can be seen in the greater number of *consultas* coming from the Council of State, indicating that Philip III was sending it more material and relying more on its advice than his father had ever done. This advice he normally accepted. The only drawback was the intolerable length of time he took to do so.

In the first three years of his reign Philip III grossly neglected his responsibilities. He was unbelievably slow in sending incoming material to the councils, and he sometimes took as long as six months and frequently two or three months to reply to a *consulta*. From about 1602 he seemed to bestir himself, but his performance was still erratic. His addiction to public ceremonial and his excessive travelling habits further isolated him from officials, who were left to administer affairs of state as best they could, waiting with increasing frustration for the king's perfunctory agreement to their *consultas*. Liaison with the councils he left in the hands of Lerma, who pushed material around from one to another and kept an eye on their activities. But it is difficult to determine the extent to which Lerma influenced conciliar decisions. He rarely attended the Council of State and he seems to have been content to let the administration get on with its own job. Councillors, of course, had other means of knowing the favourite's opinions than listening to them at the council table; and he was known to be a dangerous man to cross. But in many respects Lerma was the image and likeness of the king; he was remote, itinerant, and just as ready to accept conciliar advice as his master. There were two subjects, however, in which he took a close interest—finance, especially expenditure, and patronage. On these matters at least he made it clear who was in command.

The remoteness of the executive threw greater responsibility on the councils and forced them to review their own procedure. They reacted to the growing burden of work by producing from within themselves a number of juntas, or sub-committees, whose function was to consider urgent and special problems of the moment. They were usually composed of a few members of the parent body reinforced by specialists from other councils or from outside the councils. The Council of the Indies, whose problems encompassed many

areas of government, sought relief in the junta system. In 1600 it produced a *Junta de guerra de Indias*, specialising in the military and naval affairs of the empire, and composed of four councillors of the Indies and four members of the Council of War. In the same year it also formally constituted a special finance committee, the *Junta de hacienda*, to which were added two members of the Council of Finance; this was an *ad hoc* body which had first appeared in 1595 and operated until 1605.[14] Finally, appointments and patronage in the Indies were put in the hands of a small standing committee, the *Consejo de cámara de las Indias*; constituted in 1600, this committee soon acquired a reputation for the venality associated with the duke of Lerma and it was abolished in 1609, an indication perhaps of conciliar resistance to blatant corruption. The junta system was particularly useful to the Council of State and enabled it to cope with the increasing business coming its way. It set up a number of sub-committees to specialise in the various areas of foreign policy, such as the *Junta de Italia*, the *Junta de Inglaterra*, and the *Junta de Alemania*. In this way the Council could have a number of urgent matters considered simultaneously without tying down the whole Council to one problem. The proliferation of juntas in the reign of Philip III has usually been regarded as a disorderly process and a symptom of decline in standards of government. In fact it was a realistic development, sponsored by the administration itself, in response to the growing burden of work.[15] And it had perfectly respectable precedents in the reign of Philip II.

Continuity between the old regime and the new can also be seen in the personnel of Philip III's administration. The new king did not take over the conciliar team of his father in its entirety. Some officials were demoted and new ones were brought in. Among the latter Lerma himself was the outstanding example, and he is often supposed to have had a pernicious influence on the new administration by filling it with his own creatures. The Venetian ambassador reported: 'In Spain the Council is everything, but it is not free, or only nominally so, for no one dares to give his opinion freely, especially if it is against the will of the duke of Lerma. For having done so García de Loaysa, archbishop of Toledo, fell in disgrace, and Rodrigo Vázquez, president of the Council of Castile, was deprived of his office and expelled from court. The same happened to Pedro Portocarrero, inquisitor general, and to don Pedro de Guzmán, royal chamberlain, who spoke ill of the duke to the king'.[16] The Venetian ambassadors were not infallible guides to the Spanish political system. It can be queried whether there was anything sinister in these dismissals and whether they were due exclusively to the

[14] Schäfer, *op. cit.*, i, 170–74, 203–6.
[15] See Carter, *op. cit.*, pp. 73–74, for a vigorous reappraisal of the junta system.
[16] Contarini, *op. cit.*, p. 579.

favourite's malice. García de Loaysa and Vázquez de Arce had both been members of the junta appointed by Philip II for the education of the heir to the throne, and it may be that the latter had seen enough of them not to require their services further. A new regime, moreover, might be expected to react against members of the old who take their power and influence too much for granted. This seems to have been the case with Cristóbal de Moura, former secretary of Philip II; while not dismissed by the new king, he was posted away from Madrid, returning subsequently to the Council of State a strangely muted figure.[17] Baltasar de Zúñiga, was also posted abroad, but this was because his great diplomatic talents were especially needed in the key embassies at Brussels, Paris and Vienna; and he too returned to conciliar office for a brief, though influential, term.[18] Lerma's patronage can certainly be seen in appointments to a certain number of offices, including some at secretarial level; but there is no evidence that he attempted the impossible task of subverting the entire administration.

The Council of State provides a good example of the new dispensation. Most of the men who were now brought in—the duke of Alba, the duke of Infantado, and the constable of Castile—were obvious candidates for preferment by reason of their noble rank, their experience, and their past service to the crown. The inclusion of the royal confessor, Fray Gaspar de Córdoba, was acceptable by the standards of the time and he too had experience of administration under Philip II. Even the count of Miranda, regarded by many historians as an obvious creature of Lerma, had viceregal and conciliar experience in the previous reign and qualified for further office on his own merits.[19] The clearest line of continuity, however, was provided by two men who had been among the principal officials of Philip II, Juan de Idiáquez, comendador of León, and the count of Chinchón. The latter was a seasoned and forceful administrator, whom Philip II had employed on various councils and had marked with his approval. Idiáquez had been brought into the royal secretariat after the fall of Antonio Pérez and was one of those men around whom Philip II had built a new and hard-line administration in the 1580's. As a member of the junta which had supervised his education he was well known to the new king, who now appointed him to the Council of State; there he became one of the most influential members. A tough, faceless, and realistic administrator, Idiáquez was a witness to the survival of professionalism in government.[20] Fashioned round men like this, the new Council of State was no irresponsible creation. The criterion of appointment

[17] Matías de Novoa, *Memorias* (*Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, lx–lxi, lxix, lxxvii, lxxx, lxxxvi, Madrid, 1875–78), lx, 58.
[18] Carter, *op. cit.*, pp. 70, 208, 281.
[19] Schäfer, *op. cit.*, i, 178; Cánovas, *Decadencia*, p. 61.
[20] See *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 324.

seems to have been experience and talent, not favouritism. By the end of the first decade of the reign, with the departure of Chinchón and Miranda, its composition was modified; the marquis of Spinola and the marquis of Villafranca were brought in, while Cristóbal de Moura returned in 1612. But its character remained unchanged. It was a conservative body and a fairly unanimous one, applying the received doctrines of Spanish policy on which virtually the whole ruling class was agreed. It was not a body which could be bullied or corrupted by the duke of Lerma, even if he had tried.

The members of the Council of State were drawn almost exclusively from the higher aristocracy, as they had been under Philip II. In the other councils Philip III, like his father, employed a greater proportion of middle and lesser nobility and a hard core of *letrados*, whose university qualifications were usually enhanced by gentry status. Like his father, he rarely, if ever, employed commoners. Granted the bias towards aristocracy, Philip III's choice of servants seems to have been guided by a concern for expertise and efficiency. The count of Miranda, for example, president of the Council of Castile and a specialist in home affairs, had numerous *ad hoc* duties assigned to him in the field of internal administration, all of which he performed with great competence. Another experienced official inherited from the previous regime, the secretary Esteban de Ibarra, was used as an executive in military and defence matters and as a man who could keep the Council of War on its toes and implement its decisions. These and others like them, such as the secretaries Andrés de Prada, Antonio de Aróstegui and Juan de Ciriza, were professional bureaucrats who formed a reserve of talent on which the king could draw to reinforce the various juntas and commissions which were busy examining Spanish policy and problems. And their presence in the administration enabled it to absorb amateurs like the royal confessor and Lerma's *criados* without too much damage to standards of government.

3. The *Valimiento*

After 1598 Spanish government began to move beyond the system of personal rule practised by Philip II and to break through the restraints imposed on its development. Much of the impetus towards change came from the administration itself. But Philip III, out of his own inadequacy, was responsible for the greatest change of all, the creation of an office closely resembling that of chief minister. The fact that the office was unnamed, that the minister of his choice was his closest friend the duke of Lerma, and that Lerma's appointment initiated a permanent line of *validos*, or favourites, whose chief qualification was their personal friendship with the king, has tarnished the development in the eyes of later historians and obscured those

elements in it which represented real institutional growth.[21] It is true that the appointment of *validos* was in part a device by which the later Habsburgs, lacking the talent and the will for personal rule, sought to shield themselves from the problems of government. But it was more than this. It was, in the first place, an adjustment to circumstances. The burden of governing Spain and its vast empire had grown beyond the point where one man could carry it alone. As a mere administrative problem, with paper mounting inexorably day by day, it was more than a one-man executive could be expected to resolve. The time had come for the king to share his burden and delegate power.

In the past the crown had shared administrative work, though not policy making, with its secretaries. Less than a minister, the secretary had become more than a clerk. He had access to all state papers, his advice was sought by the king, and he was the main link between king and council. The secretaries of the Council of State in particular were key figures in the administration, especially under Philip II who had worked his secretaries hard and his Council little. Indeed the secretaries' permanent access to the king, contrasting with the irregular meetings of the Council, must have been galling to aristocratic councillors, who regarded themselves as the king's rightful advisers. For it was clear to them that the secretaries were no longer merely the Council's clerks: the *secretario de estado* had become the *secretario del rey*. Yet the development of the secretaryship did not alter the character of the secretary. He remained a professional bureaucrat without political ambition; he usually had a university qualification and some previous administrative experience; and socially he came from the lesser nobility, a matter of preference to Philip II and of resentment to the grandees.

The rise of the *valido* meant the decline of the secretary. Writing in the 1620's, Francisco Bermúdez de Pedraza, an authority on the office, lamented the passing of the golden days of the secretaryship in the sixteenth century and its depreciation at the hands of the *validos*:

> Philip III did not have a private secretary, because the grandees of Spain in his administration made sure they discussed verbally with the king the *consultas* and files of the secretary. It is the exercise of the office which counts, not the title. And it was the grandees who were now exercising the real function of the office; the secretaries were left with the title but they were merely clerks, deprived of the most important part which is to discuss and resolve personally with the king the highest affairs of state.[22]

[21] Francisco Tomás Valiente, *Los validos en la monarquía española del siglo XVII* (Madrid, 1963) provides an illuminating institutional study of the *valido*, to which the following pages are indebted; see also Carter, *op. cit.*, pp. 66–71, for a notable revision of the subject.

[22] Quoted in Valiente, *op. cit.*, 50.

The grandees had won their point. The secretaries of state were now literally secretaries of the Council of State. They were no longer private counsellors of the king. They were no more than civil servants, important ones no doubt, but completely over-shadowed by the *valido*. It was the *valido* who now supervised the councils, managed the written instruments of government, and advised the king. His office had greater political content than the secretaryship had ever had; it was unique, undivided, and carried more power. The *valido*, moreover, was closer to the king, whose friendship was at once his badge of authority and his chief qualification for office. Finally, the *valido* had greater social assets than the secretary: he almost invariably came from the higher aristocracy.[23]

The rise of the *valido* reflected not only the inadequacy of the king and the growth of administration but also the ambitions of the aristocracy. In the role of Lerma and his successors one can observe perhaps a certain reaction of the higher nobility against the type of secretary who had stood between them and the king in the reign of Philip II. In this sense the emergence of the *valido* represented an aristocratic bid, if not to control, at least to monopolise the crown, and the outcome was a political victory of the grandees over the *hidalgos* and the lesser nobility. For although the grandees, like other elements in Spanish society, overtly criticised the *validos*, their criticism was directed at individual incumbents, not at the office, and it was motivated by resentment of a rival's success or in expectation of similar preferment. This was only to be expected, for the *valido* was simply the apex of a system which permeated the whole of Spanish society, as it did other European societies in the early modern period, the system of patronage and clientage.[24]

The Spanish crown was regarded not only as a law-giver but also as a benefactor. From all parts of Spain and its dependencies a constant stream of suitors pressed on Madrid in search of appointments, honours, privileges, pensions, and grants of all kinds. They could hardly expect to reach the fount of patronage itself, the crown, so they would try to get someone highly placed to intercede for them, a councillor or an important official who had the king's ear, and naturally they would be expected to pay for this service in one way or another. Clients, then, sought to attach themselves to a powerful patron who disposed of influence and wealth, and the most influential of all was the king's favourite, and after him the favourite's favourite. For their part patrons, anxious to build up a large following as a measure of their own power and status, were willing to oblige. This accounts for the manoeuvring

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 51–53, 109–10.

[24] The penetrating study of patronage and faction in England by Sir John E. Neale, 'The Elizabethan Political Scene', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, xxxiv (1948), provides an interpretation which can usefully be applied to Spain.

for strategic positions around the king and for the constant agitation at court. Fray Antonio de Guevara, one of the many observers of the scene, recorded: 'I see the majority of courtiers swearing, blaspheming, muttering and snarling about the evils and evil-doers there are at court. But I am confident that their discontent does not stem from the vices they see practised there but from the simple fact that their rivals are prospering in the king's favour while they are not.'[25]

The patronage system had political implications. There were, of course, no political parties: these could not develop in a situation where the crown controlled policy, where the obligation of councillors to the crown was a personal and not a corporate one, and where the ruling class was agreed about basic objectives. This did not mean that there were no political differences among statesmen. But the form these differences took was faction. The rivalry of factions was concentrated on what mattered most, namely influence over the king and thereby control of patronage and all that this meant. It meant not only wealth but power. If a politician disposed of patronage and influence he could attract a large following and so create a faction of men who expected their patron to sponsor their interests at court. It was inevitable, therefore, that just as Lerma and his successors sought the king's patronage, so they in turn should distribute patronage to their clients and thus acquire their own *validos*. It was at this point that the patronage system engendered corruption. Don Pedro Franqueza, for example, younger son of impoverished Catalan gentry, became a *valido* of Lerma and through him acquired a title, count of Villalonga, and the offices of secretary and councillor of Finance; but success went to his head and after a brief if spectacular career he was purged from the administration for blatant venality. The most notorious example of the private *valido* was Rodrigo Calderón whose rapid rise from obscurity to fame and fortune at once fascinated and scandalised contemporaries.[26] Beginning as a retainer in Lerma's household he soon became his principal liaison officer, in much the same way as Lerma was the king's. His patron procured him numerous offices and grants, including the titles of count of Oliva and marquis of Siete Iglesias, and put him in the way of a large income. Calderón in turn had his creatures, rather lower down the ladder, and predictably a large number of enemies. His disreputable behaviour made him particularly vulnerable once his patron fell. Indeed his fate was worse than Lerma's. He was arrested on various charges ranging from murder to peculation, and after lengthy imprisonment he was tortured, convicted and executed at the hands of a rival faction in the following reign. The downfall of Lerma and Calderón attested to the ruthlessness of the patronage system and the

[25] Quoted in Valiente, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
[26] Cánovas, *Decadencia*, pp. 61–62.

vindictiveness of the 'outs' when they became the 'ins'. There was too much at stake to expect clemency.

The crown itself was a passive spectator of these events, trapped in a system it had helped to create. Instead of distributing their favour among a number of ministers, who could be played off one against the other, the later Habsburgs allowed one man to monopolise patronage and power. They thereby lost their independence, for they were subject to the pressure of a single interest. They became victims of powerful *validos* and aristocratic factions. What had begun as delegation of power ended as abdication of control.

Yet their original objective was valid enough. They may not have been able to formulate the problem precisely, but they were searching in effect for a chief minister. The term is actually used in contemporary texts and state papers, and although its meaning is not precise its use is sufficient to identify the official and public status of the *valido* as head of the central administration. Some political commentators viewed the development with the deepest misgivings; that a king should share his sovereignty was thought to be incompatible with absolute monarchy. And, paradoxically, in order to control the *valimiento* they sought to institutionalise it. Diego Saavedra Fajardo, the distinguished diplomat, was affronted in all his instincts by the emergence of the *valido*, and his writings show a deep concern to reduce the position to acceptable limits. The *valimiento*, he argued, 'is not only a grant, it is an office; it is not a favour but a delegation of work'.[27] For Saavedra the *valimiento* was an office without a name; far better that it be regarded as a public institution than allowed to drift into crude personal power.

As an institution the *valimiento* was not static but evolved throughout the course of the seventeenth century. The first important stage of its growth was the long tenure of the duke of Lerma, who occupied the position for twenty years. The decision of the young king to share his responsibilities with his friend and mentor must have been taken before his accession to the throne. At any rate within a few days of his father's death, and in spite of the disapproval of Moura and Idiáquez, he dissolved the small junta which Philip II had created to ease the transition, and he thus left the way open for Lerma to acquire a unique position. Simultaneously he seems to have given Lerma verbal authority to sign state papers in the king's name, in order to legitimise that position. The delegation of power can be inferred from a remarkable decree issued some years later, in 1612, in which the king declared his complete satisfaction with the service rendered by Lerma and confirmed the power given to him at the beginning of the reign. The decree ordered each council and its president 'to comply with whatever the duke instructs or

[27] *Idea de un Príncipe político-cristiano* (1640) (*Biblioteca de autores españoles*, 25, Madrid, 1947), p. 126.

orders . . . and also to furnish him with any information he requires'.[28] This was the formal instrument of delegation, with retrospective validity to the beginning of the reign. It stated in effect that orders signed by Lerma had the force of royal orders, and thus placed the entire conciliar system at the disposition of the *valido*. This was how Lerma himself interpreted his powers. He received incoming material from the secretary, distributed it to the councils, and made executive decisions on the councils' *consultas*. No doubt he discussed these matters with the king privately, and he was always careful to couch his instructions in the form of a written or verbal order from the king himself. But he was acting in fact as the executive. This was so in his relations with the Council of State, the chief policy-making body; and as he exercised his own discretion in deciding what matters should be remitted from the other councils to the Council of State he became the controlling link in the whole system, though not a particularly efficient one.[29] Towards the other councils, such as the Council of Aragon and the Council of the Indies, he also assumed the attitude of the executive, though preserving the form of merely transmitting 'the king's orders'.[30] The Council of Finance, it is true, was an object of more particular interest to the king, and he usually looked more closely at its *consultas*, though he also usually agreed with them. But Lerma himself sent frequent and peremptory orders, overtly in the king's name, to the president of the Council of Finance, ordering payments of various kinds, including military expenditure. Finally, Lerma was careful to keep control of patronage in his own hands. In July 1605 he instructed the secretary of the Council of State that matters concerning appointments and grants must be submitted directly to the king, and that the Council could only consider them if they were expressly remitted to it by the king. In practice all decisions on patronage matters were sent by Lerma, again acting in the name of the king, to the secretary for communication to the applicant.[31]

For twenty years, until 1618, Lerma was chief minister in all but name. In the course of this time he grew in wealth and in unpopularity; inevitably he became the target of criticism of Spain's economic condition and international policies. His unbridled greed, his unscrupulous use of patronage, and the scandalous behaviour of some of his clients, notably Calderón, outraged public opinion; his enemies began to sharpen their knives and his subordinates to edge away. In the course of twenty years the king too grew, if not in wisdom at least in maturity. The tutelage of his childhood mentor, to which

[28] Valido, op. cit., p. [illegible].
[29] *Ibid.*, pp. [illegible].
[30] For examples of Lerma's relations with the Council of Aragon see J. Reglà, 'La expulsión de los moriscos y sus consecuencias', *Hispania*, xiii (1953), 515–67; for the Council of the Indies see Schäfer, op. cit., I, [illegible].
[31] Valido, op. cit., p. [illegible].

he had clung with relief as a young king of twenty-one, was becoming increasingly ridiculous as he approached middle age. After about 1615, moreover, a sense of disillusionment possessed him, as he became aware of the shortcomings of Lerma and his clients, of growing dissatisfaction in the country, and above all of the real state of government finances. Meanwhile, as the king emancipated himself from Lerma, new voices were making themselves heard in council, especially those of Baltasar de Zúñiga, now returned from his embassies abroad, and of Fray Luis de Aliaga, the new confessor. On the international front Spain was facing new problems. The situation in Germany was deteriorating; Spain's commitment to the Habsburg cause and her position in the Low Countries had to be reappraised. Lerma stood for a policy of peace and non-intervention in the affairs of northern Europe, a policy which in itself had much to recommend it but which coming from Lerma lacked moral conviction.

Court and administration lived in expectation, trying to detect the next candidate for royal favour; and clients awaited the decision of the supreme patron. Opposition to the ageing favourite was mobilised by Aliaga, whose opinions on foreign policy coincided with those of Lerma but who otherwise abhorred the latter's influence on public affairs. An anti-Lerma faction began to form, grouped around a new contender for the *valimiento*, none other than Lerma's own son, Cristóbal de Sandoval y Rojas, duke of Uceda. And in the Council of State the views of Zúñiga, the principal advocate of a hard-line policy in northern Europe, began to win support. Faction and policy alike were moving against Lerma. In a desperate attempt to strengthen his position he procured a cardinalate from Rome, a typical move by a man who viewed politics almost exclusively in terms of personal prestige. Even Philip III was unimpressed. From about April 1618 he began to withdraw his confidence from Lerma, restricting his access to state papers and warning him to prepare for retirement. When during July and August the Council of State was uncharacteristically divided over a major policy issue, whether or not to intervene in Germany, Lerma found himself in a distinct minority, powerless to keep Spain out of a war that was going to ensnare her for forty years. On 2 October he was summoned to the king's presence in the Escorial, and after an interview lasting two hours he emerged shaken, incredulous, and discarded. He retired to his estates in Valencia where he died in 1623 at the age of seventy-one, having been forced by those who came to power under Philip III's successor to disgorge a large part of his fortune.

Philip III acted with unwonted resolution in dismissing Lerma. According to an anonymous chronicler, 'even the lamb has to roar once; for it was important that His Majesty should overcome his meekness and show his favourites that he was determined enough to perceive and punish misdeeds and

dismiss their authors'.[32] Lerma's clients, moreover, inevitably felt the cold wind blowing through the Escorial, and his particular favourites like Calderón were mercilessly pursued by their enemies in the new regime. Yet his fall was not the occasion of a general upheaval of government, and the hard core of the administration continued unchanged. As for government by *valido*, that was too valuable to the king to be relinquished and he still clutched at the support which it offered him.

Uceda succeeded Lerma in the *valimiento*, and the transfer of power was instantaneous.[33] It was also incomplete. On 15 November 1618 Philip III issued a decree which had the effect of revoking that of 1612; from now onwards all policy statements, orders and matters of patronage emanating from the royal will were to be signed by the king and by no one else.[34] This ended, formally at least, the almost total delegation of power by king to *valido*, and it meant that the councils were not so dependent on Uceda as they had been on Lerma. It is a sign perhaps that Philip III had learnt some lessons and was determined this time not to abandon all his responsibilities. If this is so, he did not keep his resolution. Before long Uceda was handling a good deal of conciliar business on behalf of the king, and the administration seemed to regard him as chief minister. Nevertheless, his position was never as well-defined as that of Lerma. He did not monopolise liaison between king and councils; and to some extent traditional avenues of communication reasserted themselves. Uceda himself had no political gifts and there was a certain hollowness about his regime. Was this featureless man a figure-head behind whom other advisers operated, Aliaga, the keeper of the king's conscience, and, in foreign affairs, Baltasar de Zúñiga? If the suspicion is correct it would signify a sharing of delegated power, in itself a healthier political development. But the evidence is too vague to yield firm answers. If the chroniclers are to be believed, Philip III died repentant of having abandoned power into the hands of *validos*. And on the day of his death, at the express wish of the new king, Uceda was obliged to hand over state papers and the management of government to Baltasar de Zúñiga.

4. The Poverty of Government

The empire which Philip III inherited was based on Castile, but it was not governed by the laws of Castile or assessed by the taxes of Castile. Even Philip II, absolutist though he was, had not attempted to challenge the autonomy of his various kingdoms or to incorporate them into a centralised

[43] Quoted ibid., p. 9.
[44] On the fall of Lerma and the succession of Uceda see Novoa, *Memorias*, lxi, 145–59.
[45] Vallenar, *op. cit.*, pp. 10–11, 162.

state. Although Philip III described himself as king of Spain, he was first and foremost king of Castile and his power was absolute only in Castile. Even within the kingdom of Castile the provinces of Vizcaya (Biscay), Guipúzcoa and Alava enjoyed a degree of fiscal and administrative autonomy. Outside Castile separatism was even more pronounced. The Crown of Aragon, which included the realms of Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia, had its identity enshrined in highly developed *fueros*, or constitutional rights. Each of these realms was governed independently, each had its own laws and tax system, and in each the king was represented by a viceroy. Castilian sovereignty was even more attenuated in Italy, where the kingdoms of Sicily and Naples and the duchy of Milan were governed for the king of Spain by viceroys or governors and administered by their own institutions. In the Low Countries Spanish sovereignty, where it was effective, was exercised by the archdukes, who were something less than independent rulers and something more than mere governors, and who ruled through local institutions with the assistance of local personnel.[35] This constitutional structure cannot be described as a federal one, for there was no federal agency at the centre, other than the crown itself. It was a personal union, which fully respected the independence of each of the parts. In practice Castilian power made itself felt to some degree. The permanent residence of the king in Castile, the preponderance of Castilians in public office, and the situation of the councils in Madrid made unity rather more effective in practice than it was in theory. But there was one area of government where the constituent kingdoms were particularly sensitive to attacks on their prerogatives—in matters of finance. One of the greatest problems of the Castilian government was to persuade them to contribute to common expenditure in proportion to their resources.

The Spanish Low Countries contributed only modest amounts to the general expenses of the Monarchy and these were swallowed up in local administration; defence expenditure was subsidised from Castile. From the time of the dissolution of the States General in 1600 a subsidy (*subsidio ordinario*) of 3,600,000 florins was collected annually; this was voted by the various provincial estates, but it was understood that they could not refuse it without compromising the king's sovereignty; and in order to allow them to discuss it without danger the administration usually asked them for a higher amount than it was likely to get.[36] In addition, and more reluctantly, they also voted an extraordinary subsidy of varying amounts. The Italian dependencies contributed much more to imperial expenditure than did the Low Countries.[37]

[35] Charles Howard Carter, 'Belgian "autonomy" under the Archdukes, 1598–1621', *Journal of Modern History*, xxxvi (1964), 249–59.
[36] H. Pirenne, *Histoire de Belgique* (3rd ed., 7 vols., Brussels, 1909–32), iv, 402.
[37] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 161–64.

For Spanish policy imposed upon them an important and costly role in Europe and the Mediterranean, a role which they sustained to a great extent out of their own resources; these resources were severely strained by tax demands which, at the end of the sixteenth century, were being met to the tune of 5½ million ducats a year by Sicily, Naples and Milan combined.

Within the peninsula Portugal was completely autonomous in fiscal matters and contributed nothing to the general expenses of the Monarchy. The Basque provinces, though part of Castile, were also immune from Castile's demands.[38] They did not pay the *alcabala*, the *millones*, or the other standard taxes of Castile, and they even complained that merchandise imported from Castile was already charged with these taxes. The only revenue which the king received from the Basque provinces was the yield from his feudal and seigneurial rights, and this was hardly enough to cover the cost of his administration in the area. In Vizcaya, for example, his patrimonial revenue—some 30,000 to 40,000 ducats a year—was normally expended on the grants and pensions of various kinds with which he was expected to regale his subjects in the province. The latter resisted all attempts of the central government to introduce ordinary taxation, no matter how temporary, for that would have compromised their *hidalguía* and consequently their permanent immunity from taxation. The attitude of the Basques, however, was not unreasonable, for theirs were small provinces, sparsely populated and economically undeveloped. Whenever Spain was at war with France they defended the frontier at their own cost, and to this extent contributed to imperial finances.

The Crown of Aragon was equally stubborn in its resistance to the tax demands of the central government, and actually contributed less than the Italian dependencies to general expenses. Royal income from Valencia was effectively confined to the revenue from crown property and seigneurial jurisdiction. This yielded the modest sum of about 100,000 libros a year which was consumed in the maintenance of royal administration in the area. In the reign of Philip III the cortes of Valencia voted only one subsidy, in 1604, amounting to 400,000 ducats. From the cortes of Catalonia he received in 1599 a subsidy of 1,100,000 ducats. And from the cortes of Aragon he received nothing. In Aragon and Catalonia most of the taxes on merchandise were in the hands of the towns or of individual proprietors; the crown had the right to one-fifth (*quinto*) of these revenues annually, but in many cases had allowed it to fall into disuse. Philip III's local administration began to reclaim the *quinto* for the crown, and those towns which could not produce proof of legal immunity from the claim were gradually, and against much opposition, forced to pay. The campaign for the *quinto* was particularly intense in Catalonia, and when it reached Barcelona the latter flatly refused

[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 159–60.

to contribute. The refusal was accompanied by the usual appeal to Catalan liberties, an appeal which would have been more convincing had the not inconsiderable revenues of Barcelona been administered with integrity by the municipal oligarchy. In any case nothing was further from the intention of Philip III's government than to initiate constitutional change.

Castile continued to be the treasury of the Monarchy. And general expenditure continued to outstrip Castile's resources. In the first decade of the reign defence expenditure, especially in the Low Countries, was still the major charge on revenue. In addition Philip III inherited the considerable debts incurred by his father. He made matters worse by his own extravagance. He spent far too much money on himself and almost as much on his favourites. Among the numerous gifts to the duke of Lerma was one of 50,000 ducats made in the euphoria engendered by the arrival of the Indies fleet. On the occasion of the king's marriage in 1599 his lavish gifts to various favoured subjects passed all reason; the whole extravaganza cost 950,000 ducats, 300,000 of which were disposed of by Lerma. Philip III, in fact, behaved as though the public treasury was his private property. Traditionally this may have been a valid assumption, though the political economists of the time, the *arbitristas*, were beginning to challenge it.[39] Indeed Juan de Mariana, the Jesuit political philosopher, was quite clear on the subject: 'The king is not allowed to spend at liberty the money granted to him by his subjects as if it were income from his private possession'.[40] It was obvious, even to Philip III, that the grants of the cortes had a public character which placed them out of his reach; in any case they were usually appropriated to specific items of expenditure. But there were numerous other revenues on which he could lay his hands. In addition to his private patrimony, moreover, the king, as the highest official, possessed a kind of civil list—some 600,000 ducats a year—charged on public revenues. This, however, by no means covered all his expenses—royal household, secret service payments, gifts to clients, to mention only a few. The maintenance of the royal family alone cost Castile about 1,300,000 ducats a year under Philip III—over 10 per cent. of the budget—compared to 1,000,000 a year under his two predecessors and his immediate successor.

The scale of expenditure called for greater revenue than the government possessed. Yet there was a real reluctance to impose new taxes. These were known to provoke resistance and criticism of government policies. And as its own conduct was particularly vulnerable to criticism, the government of

[39] José Luis Sureda Carrión, *La Hacienda castellana y los economistas del siglo XVII* (Madrid, 1949), pp. 77–79.

[40] *De mutatione monetae*, in John Laures, *The Political Economy of Juan de Mariana* (New York, 1928), p. 299.

Philip III and Lerma preferred not to stir up hostile interests or alienate public opinion; its policy was to let sleeping dogs lie. There were, in fact, two alternatives to heavier taxation. One was to reduce defence expenditure, an expedient which appealed to Philip III not out of conviction but on the assumption that peace was easier than reform. As other nations too had an interest in ending the long and costly conflict inherited from the previous century, the Spanish government was able to continue the process of peace-making begun by the Franco-Spanish treaty of 1598. Peace was made with England in 1604, and in April 1607 a cease-fire was arranged with the Dutch, followed by the Truce of Antwerp in 1609. Disengagement in northern Europe, of course, did not mean disarmament elsewhere, and Spain continued to have heavy defence commitments in Italy, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. But recourse had already been had to a second expedient, one which branded the government as bankrupt of ideas as well as of money—debasement of the coinage.

In 1599 Philip III departed from a long Spanish tradition of sound money and issued in Castile a vellon coinage of pure copper in order to save the silver with which it had previously been alloyed. The 100 per cent. profit accruing to the government from this operation encouraged it to decree even heavier issues of copper vellon in 1602 and 1603, in spite of the bitter protests of the cortes. In 1608, in return for a subsidy, Philip III promised the cortes not to coin further vellon for twenty years, but the enormous budget deficit in 1617 caused him to seek release from his promise, and the cortes agreed to a further issue sufficient to yield a profit of one million ducats. This was followed in 1621 by yet another issue, designed to yield a profit of 800,000 ducats. Altogether Philip III issued copper vellon to the amount of 27 million ducats.[41] The consequences were predictable, at least to many outside the government. Monetary instability drove gold and silver out of circulation. Vellon receded from parity with the precious metals; the average annual premium on the exchange of vellon for silver rose from 1 per cent. in 1603 to 3 per cent. in 1619. As taxes were paid in vellon and defence expenditure abroad had to be made in silver, the crown itself was one of the biggest losers. Currency debasement, moreover, prolonged into the seventeenth century the great price inflation generated by American silver in the sixteenth century, but with an important difference; whereas the price revolution of the sixteenth century had been a steady and continuous process, the new inflation moved by fits and starts and was periodically interrupted by sudden deflation, thus causing great harm to business activities and to all those who lived on annuities, pensions and fixed incomes. And inflation hit the

[41] Earl J. Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, 1501–1650 (Cambridge, Mass., 1934), pp. 71–79, 88–93, 102–3.

greatest consumer of all, the government itself. Many of these disadvantages were identified by contemporaries, by the cortes and the *arbitristas*. Mariana wrote a treatise on the subject which he published in Germany in 1609. He denounced Philip III's monetary policy as hidden taxation and warned that it would drive out gold and silver and lead to inflation. But on this subject the government was hypersensitive. Mariana was arrested by the Inquisition and charged with lèse-majesté for criticising the monetary policy of the king before a foreign audience; and although he was released after a year his treatise was put on the Spanish Index.[42]

What were the main sources of revenue from Castile? First, there was the ordinary income from the *alcabala* and the customs. The latter covered a wide range of charges on internal and foreign trade and constituted a basic item of revenue, though one highly vulnerable to fraud. The *alcabala* was a 10 per cent. tax on sales, which the larger towns had previously compounded for an agreed yearly payment. By 1612 it was raising 2,754,766 ducats a year, more than twice the amount yielded in the 1570's.[43] This was still well below its potential yield, for many places and people, including all ecclesiastics, had acquired exemption from the tax or paid at a reduced rate. In many parts of Castile, moreover, the *alcabala* had fallen into the hands of private proprietors, either through grants to powerful nobles in the middle ages or by purchase in the course of the sixteenth century; and the improvident government of Philip III continued the process of alienation in exchange for a quick though short-term income. These traditional revenues of the crown were supplemented by grants of the cortes.[44] The *servicio ordinario y extraordinario* was granted by the cortes every three years and since 1591 had been fixed at 405,000 ducats a year. The most important grant, however, was the *millones*, a tax on basic foodstuffs, which was supposed to yield 2 million ducats a year but in fact grew to 3 million in the early years of the reign, reverting to 2 million by the end of the reign. In an age of inflation the value of these fixed grants effectively declined, though the *millones* occasionally responded to rising prices. In addition to this ordinary and extraordinary income, the crown had revenues from ecclesiastical sources, and these extended beyond Castile into all the king's dominions.[45] The most important was the *cruzada*, the revenue from the sale of bulls of indulgence, whose average annual yield in Spain alone was 800,000 ducats paid in silver by the banker who administered the revenue; the *subsidio*—some 420,000 ducats a year—was a proportion of church revenues paid to the crown for the upkeep of the naval establishment

[42] Laures, *op. cit.*, p. 282; see also G. Lewy, *Constitutionalism and Statecraft during the Golden Age of Spain: A Study of the Political Philosophy of Juan de Mariana, S.J.* (Geneva, 1960), pp. 30–32.
[43] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 194–203.
[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 232–38.
[45] *Ibid.*, pp. 241–49.

in the Mediterranean; and the *excusado* was an income of 250,000 ducats a year derived from ecclesiastical property. Finally, the crown possessed its celebrated revenue from the Indies.[46] The decade 1610–20, however, saw the beginning of a precipitous decline in silver remittances from America, reflecting the profound crisis in the Indies trade which hit both public and private returns.[47] For the five-year period 1611–15 the crown received 7,212,921 pesos, compared with 10,974,318 pesos in the peak period 1596–1600. In the years 1616–20 there was an even sharper drop, to 4,347,788 pesos, a level from which the American revenue never substantially rose during the rest of the seventeenth century.

In 1598 the crown's estimated revenue amounted to 9,731,405 ducats.[48] Of this, 4,634,293 ducats—drawn principally from major taxes such as the *alcabala*, customs, and the *subsidio*—were either already assigned in advance to permanent items of expenditure, principally *juros* (state bonds) and certain defence commitments, or had been recently alienated to tax proprietors. The rest of the revenue, just over 5 million ducats—derived from the *millones* and *servicio* granted by the cortes, the *cruzada* and the income from the Indies—was theoretically free of charges but in fact much of it was committed in advance to bankers in payment of previous *asientos*, or defence contracts. Most of the defence expenditure was incurred in the Low Countries, which in the first twelve years of the reign consumed over 40 million ducats.[49] As commitments increased the time came when the whole of the 'free' revenue for several years in advance was assigned to bankers and there was nothing left to cover further *asientos*. This point was reached in 1607; the government had now anticipated revenue up to 1611 and the total debt stood at 22,748,971 ducats.[50] For this situation there was a classical remedy, known at the time as the *medio general*: contracted revenues were released from their commitments and the bankers were indemnified with *juros*.[51] Operations of this kind, though frequently called bankruptcies, were in effect forced conversions of debts; Philip II had recourse to them on three occasions, roughly every twenty years. In using the device once, Philip III could claim not to have exceeded his quota, but once was enough to worsen the crown's credit, and the government was forced to re-think its defence policy. Suspension of payments in 1607, therefore, was followed by suspension of war in the Low Countries in 1609. Yet although Spain was no longer involved in

[46] Hamilton, *American Treasure*, pp. 34–38.
[47] See below, pp. 182, 202.
[48] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 3–18.
[49] 'Relación del dinero remitido a Flandes', 13 September 1598–20 June 1609, *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, xxxvi, 509.
[50] *Actas de las Cortes de Castilla*, 1563–1632 (51 vols., Madrid, 1861–1929), xxiii, 543–59.
[51] See *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 142.

a major war, her financial troubles were not at an end. A number of localised conflicts in Italy, defence spending in Germany, the Mediterranean and the overseas empire, and the expenses of court and government actually raised expenditure beyond previous wartime levels. In 1615 the year's expenditure was expected to exceed 9 million ducats.[52]

On the eve of the Thirty Years War, therefore, Spanish finances were badly overstrained. Much of the appropriated revenue in 1617 failed to meet its commitments. The remaining 'free' revenue amounted to 5,357,000 ducats, compared with an expenditure which had risen to some 12 million ducats. This comprised 5 million in defence costs (principally in the Low Countries, where Spain was now re-priming the military establishment, and Milan), 3 million owed in unpaid *juros*, and the remainder for the royal household, officials' salaries, delayed debts and sundry other expenses.[53] The budget for 1618 looked even worse: 'free' revenue had now dropped to 1,601,000 ducats and was utterly inadequate for existing commitments. It was at this point that Spain intervened in Germany, on a modest scale at first but sufficient to aggravate expenditure. Long before its arrival the public income from the Indies for 1619 was assigned to bankers on account.

What could the government do? Advice there was in plenty. The Council of Castile took a long look at the economic situation before producing its notable *consulta* of 1619 on the state of the nation.[54] It drew attention to the damaging effects of excessive taxation on Castile, and underlined two particular causes of rising expenditure—the extravagant doling out of grants and pensions, and the exaggerated growth of the bureaucracy, much of which was becoming at once venal and superfluous. The results, it concluded, could be seen in the financial situation: the whole of the crown's income was committed in advance, except for the 'free' revenue, and this had been anticipated in *asientos*. But Philip III's mind was closed to argument of this kind. In the same year, in spite of the Council's advice to cut conspicuous expenditure, he decided to take a long-planned trip to Portugal to have his son recognised as heir apparent, an excursion which proved to be inordinately expensive. Yet he still shrank from taking the extreme step of imposing new taxes. He preferred more devious methods, such as issuing further quantities of vellon, sequestering a portion of private treasure on the Indies fleet in return for *juros*, and, of course, anticipating income. The last *asiento* contracted by Philip III shortly before his death in March 1621 was for 4½ million ducats, most of it for defence expenditure in the Low Countries, the

[52] J. H. Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans. A Study in the Decline of Spain* (1598–1640) (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 187–88.
[53] 'Relación de la Real Hacienda', 1617, *Actas de las Cortes de Castilla*, xxx, 15–32.
[54] Angel González Palencia, *La Junta de Reformación*, 1618–1625 (*Archivo Histórico Español*, 5, Valladolid, 1932), doc. no. 4.

Atlantic and the Mediterranean. This consumed all his current 'free' revenue and that of the future up to 1624.

The crushing weight of defence expenditure fell almost exclusively on Castile. Inevitably Castilians began to demand that the tax burden should be shared by other parts of the Monarchy. The argument was developed by a number of *arbitristas*. In a paper presented to Philip III on his accession Baltasar Alamos de Barrientos pointed out that 'in other states all the parts contribute to the maintenance and greatness of the head, as is only fair. . . . But in ours, it is the head which does the work and provides the other members with their sustenance'.[55] Pedro Fernández Navarrete echoed these sentiments at the beginning of the following reign:

> It is only fair that the burdens should be properly apportioned; that Castile should continue to provide for the royal household and for the defence of its own coasts and the route to the Indies; that Portugal should pay for its own military defences and for the East Indies fleets, as it did before incorporation with Castile; and that Aragon and Italy should defend their own coasts and provide the necessary military and naval forces for this. It is quite wrong that the head should be impoverished and weakened while the other members, wealthy and populous as they are, remain spectators of its burdens.[56]

In the eyes of Castilians, therefore, Aragon's constitutional barriers preserved a fiscal immunity which was at once outmoded and unjust. The *fueros* of the eastern kingdoms, of course, were not designed with the welfare of the underprivileged in mind; peasants and urban workers in those lands did not live in a tax-free paradise. But the taxes they paid went to the local governing bodies, dominated, as in the rest of Spain, by the aristocracy and the urban patriciate. They certainly did not go to the crown. There was, therefore, truth in the charge that the periphery paid much less revenue to the crown than did the centre.[57] In 1610, for example, income from Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia together yielded no more than 600,000 ducats, whereas in Castile the *alcabala* and *millones* alone (taxes which the east did not pay) produced 5,100,000.[58] There is evidence, indeed, that Castile was actually subsidising the administration and particularly the defence establishments of the eastern kingdoms.[59] It is not surprising that Philip III's treasury officials should have joined the *arbitristas* in demanding a fairer distribution of fiscal obligations among the component parts of the Monarchy. Their demands

[55] Quoted in Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans*, p. 184.
[56] *Conservación de Monarquías* (1626) (*Biblioteca de autores españoles*, 25, Madrid, 1947), p. 496.
[57] For a quantitative comparison see Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans*, p. 185.
[58] García Carrión, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
[59] Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans*, p. 190.

were reinforced by the Council of Castile in its *consulta* of 1619, when it advocated, among other things, that the various partners should make greater revenue contributions in order to relieve Castile; for it was only just that 'they should provide, and should be requested to provide, some assistance, so that the whole burden should not fall on one weak and exhausted victim'.[60] To implement proposals like this, however, would mean attacking the laws and provoking the susceptibilities of the eastern kingdoms. And this was not the stuff that Philip III's government was made of.

[60] González Palencia, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

CHAPTER III

RECESSION AND REACTION

1. Truce in the Low Countries

The government of Philip III was a conservative government. The national objectives developed in the course of the sixteenth century—defence of Spanish interests in northern Europe and, within the peninsula, maintenance of an equilibrium between the power of Castile and the rights of the regions—these it accepted in their essentials. But it was no longer possible to apply the classical precepts of Spanish policy undiluted. The environment was different. Economic circumstances were beginning to move against Spain; a basic sector of the economy, the Indies trade, after a century of almost constant growth, entered a period first of stagnation, then of depression. In a time of acute economic disorder political strategy developed its own neuroses. Financial stringency induced uncertainty and vacillation: in foreign policy aggression alternated with inertia, and at home Castile began to readjust its relations with the periphery.

The financial crisis in the last years of Philip II's reign was enough in itself to check Spanish action in northern Europe. Peace with France in 1598 was a recognition that Spain could not fight a war on three fronts simultaneously. In the Low Countries the transfer of sovereignty to the archdukes was a belated attempt to end the struggle with the northern provinces by peaceful means and to close one of the gaping holes of Spanish expenditure. The Archduke Albert was a realist and he used his sovereignty to reduce commitments still further. On his own initiative he sent an ambassador to London to open negotiations with the new king of England, James I, and he urged Madrid to take the dispute to the conference table; the policy bore fruit in the Treaty of London (1604) which ended the long Anglo-Spanish war. With the exception of Lerma, the government of Philip III was not enthusiastic over military withdrawal in northern Europe. But even Madrid had to bow to financial arguments. It was now clear that the economy was suffering severe dislocation. In the Atlantic sector, although the long period of growth had not yet finished its course, a series of fluctuations from 1597 brought the first signs of contraction in the Indies trade and the first indication that Spain could no longer rely on constant returns from America.[1]

[1] P. Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique* (1504–1650) (8 vols., Paris, 1955–59), viii, 2, 1, pp. 767–68.

It was the Low Countries, always the severest test of Spanish resources, which reacted most sharply to Spain's difficulties.[2] Since the 1590's, and the costly intervention in France, the Dutch Republic had made further political, economic and military advances. And the Spanish Road, the vital link between metropolis and its distant dominions, was now unmistakably dependent on French goodwill, the major power capable of cutting it. Events in 1600 were ominous. The war against the United Provinces was now being fought on yet another front—the Indian Ocean—and in the Low Countries itself a mutiny of unpaid troops worsened Spanish prospects. Yet Philip III's determination to continue the struggle was suddenly rewarded.[3] In 1602–3 a cyclical expansion in the Indies trade brought returns comparable to those of the peak years of 1584–87 and enabled the government to send larger remittances to the Low Countries. These provided the means for renewing military operations and led to the successful siege of Ostend, conducted by a brilliant new military commander. Ambrosio Spinola. The victory at Ostend in 1604 was the prelude to a large-scale offensive in which Spinola penetrated into Frisia with the object of driving a wedge into the United Provinces and cutting their communications with Germany. But the Yssel campaign came to an abrupt conclusion in 1606. The difficult terrain and the skilful tactics of the Dutch brought a halt to the Spanish offensive. But they were not the only obstacles. Yet another large-scale mutiny of Spanish troops, in 1606, crippled the war effort from within; and mutiny was caused by lack of pay under the financial stringency imposed by the fall in returns from the Indies in the years 1604–5.[4]

The revolt of the *tercios* in 1606 shook Spain's belief in the possibility of reconquering the United Provinces; combined with the suspension of payments in 1607 and the losses suffered in the Indies trade in the same year, it persuaded the Spanish government that the time had come to negotiate. Again, however, it was the administration in Brussels which first faced up to realities. The Archduke Albert appreciated that the United Provinces would never agree to unconditional surrender. They were now a state, recognised as such by many European powers; they possessed an effective administration, a buoyant overseas trade, and natural protection against an invading army. The recent campaign, for all its initial success, simply showed the impossibility of reducing the Dutch by force. On his own initiative the archduke

[2] P. Chaunu, 'Séville et la "Belgique" (1555–1648)', *Revue du Nord*, xlii, 2 (1960), 259–92; Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road*, 1567–1659 (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 68–70.

[3] Joseph Lefèvre, *Spinola et la Belgique*, 1601–1627 (Brussels, 1947), 29–31.

[4] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1143–57, 1189–1252; for a different interpretation of the financial history of these years, and the policy implications, see Geoffrey Parker, *Spain and the Netherlands*, 1559–1659: *Ten Studies* (London, 1979), pp. 40–41.

concluded a cease-fire with the Dutch in March 1607; containing as it did a recognition of Dutch sovereignty for the duration of the cease-fire, this was an enormous concession of principle.[5] Subsequent negotiations for a formal truce conceded even more. For it was clear that Spain would have to recognise Dutch sovereignty in such terms that there would be no saving clause in favour of Catholics. These were serious blows to Castilian pride, so much so that Madrid was loath to follow the pacificatory advice of the archduke, supported though it was by the military expert, Spinola. Philip III sought to evade the ultimate decision. The year 1608 was a record year in the transatlantic trade; and in August a sense of euphoria induced by massive returns from the Indies caused the Spanish government to toy with the idea of breaking off the peace negotiations and subsidising a new offensive.[6] But the income of one exceptional year could not solve Spain's financial problems. This was recognised even in Madrid, and the government was forced to accept the inevitable and to conclude a twelve years' truce with the United Provinces in 1609.

The decision of 1609 marked a stage in Spanish policy. In the Low Countries it gave Spain a breathing space. The Spanish army was reduced to a peace-time force of 15,000, and the annual provision was cut from 9 million to 4 million florins. Overseas, it is true, the Dutch onslaught on Iberian positions continued, though directed perhaps more at Portugal than at Spain. But by any standards Spain had suffered a political, military, and ideological defeat; and the affront to its prestige was immense. A defeat for Spain was essentially a defeat for Castile, for it was Castile which provided the policy and the sustenance for Spain's role as a world power. Thwarted abroad, wounded in its self-esteem, Castile developed a new and a heightened sensitivity in its political relations; it began to seek compensation nearer home and to look more closely at its position within the peninsula.

2. The Expulsion of the Moriscos

The Truce of Antwerp was signed on 9 April 1609. On the same day Philip III took another decision—to expel the moriscos from Spain.[7] The two events were not a coincidence. Spanish statesmen of the time measured

[5] Lefèvre, *op. cit.*, 36–44.

[6] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1276–95. On the truce of 1609 see Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road*, p. 251.

[7] On the expulsion of the moriscos see particularly J. Reglà, 'La expulsión de los moriscos y sus consecuencias. Contribución a su estudio', *Hispania*, xiii (1953), 215–68, 402–79; H. Lapeyre, *Géographie de l'Espagne Morisque* (Paris, 1959); Antonio Domínguez Ortiz and Bernard Vincent, *Historia de los moriscos* (Madrid, 1978).

out their policy by calculation, not by accident, and Spanish policy was never more calculating than it was in 1609. The international situation was at last propitious for a measure which was regarded as one of national security. The detente achieved by peace with England in 1604 and with the United Provinces in 1609 enabled Spain to concentrate her land and sea forces in the Mediterranean in order to ensure the security of the operation against the moriscos.[8] But there was a further and more complex connection between the events of 1609. Behind them loomed the worsening economic situation, of which the fluctuations in the Indies trade were at once a symptom and a cause. On Spain's position in the Low Countries the impact of economic restriction was direct. Its effect on the position of the moriscos was more insidious. In a period of declining living standards—the years 1604–5 saw a pronounced cyclical recession in the Indies trade after a long period of expansion—the resentment of the masses towards a successful minority might be expected to become more acute. Not that the Spanish government responded directly to public opinion; but its decision reflected the general malaise. It also reflected the state of mind of Castile's leaders. The time had passed when they could impose their will in northern Europe; they had been forced to recognise the sovereignty of people they regarded as rebel subjects and to abandon the religious interests of their Catholic brethren. But in Spain at least they were still masters and here they could find moral compensation for their retreat abroad.[9] To expel the moriscos was to rid Spain of a group long identified as national enemies and simultaneously to strike a blow for religious orthodoxy, vindicating at once Castilian power and prestige. In a government which wanted victories on the cheap the psychological factor was not insignificant.

Ironically the war with Islam had lost much of its urgency and by 1609 it was no longer a major preoccupation.[10] Of course the depredations of the Barbary corsairs and their Ottoman allies continued to pose a security problem in the western Mediterranean; Spanish shipping was still subject to constant attack, and Spanish prisoners were still held for ransom money by the enemy in North Africa. To this relentless pressure the Spanish naval authorities reacted with vigour and some success, and in the period 1601–16 they took the war into the enemy's own camp. But no one seriously believed in waging a war of religion, and there was no real danger of an invasion of

[8] F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris, 1949), pp. 592–93.

[9] P. Chaunu, 'Minorités et conjoncture. L'expulsion des Morisques en 1609', *Revue Historique*, ccxxv (1961), 81–98.

[10] See *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 248–50.

Spain or of military collusion between Algiers and the moriscos. The strategic argument, therefore, had lost much of its point. But it was still used. Lerma himself used it. In 1596, as viceroy of Valencia, he had reported his fears of an attack by sea combined with an insurrection of the moriscos. But the Council of Aragon thought he exaggerated the danger and argued that, even were the Turkish fleet to approach, the moriscos were in no position to act, 'for they possess neither arms, nor supplies, nor fortified positions, nor a base for the Turkish fleet'.[11]

The basic problem of the moriscos was a problem of integration. The moriscos remained a class apart, with their own language and religion and a way of life directed by Islamic law. In Aragon and Valencia, descendants of those who had submitted to forced conversion, they were a genuine enclave of Islam within Spain, resistant to christianisation and hispanisation, with their own leaders and upper class, their rich and their poor, all equally immune to integration. And as their spiritual home was outside Spain so, it was suspected, was their political allegiance. In Castilian eyes it was an abnormal and monstrous situation, an admission of the failure of past policies. Yet public opinion, in so far as it can be tested in the cortes and in the literature of the time, was not pressing for a final solution, nor was there a mass campaign for expulsion. There was no question of toleration: everyone agreed that Islam was an inveterate enemy of the Catholic faith and of Spain. But hostility towards the moriscos was normally expressed against specific abuses—banditry, or competition for jobs—rather than in a general condemnation or demand for expulsion. The policy debate was limited to ruling groups in church and state. There was a division of opinion over the religious issue: could not some moriscos be genuinely assimilated into Christian belief and society? A number of ecclesiastics such as Fray Luis de Aliaga, the royal confessor, and the bishops of Tortosa and Orihuela, came to the defence of 'well-disposed' moriscos and of genuine converts. But their advocacy was outweighed by more fanatical voices. Jaime Bleda, Dominican friar and member of the Inquisition of Valencia, urged Rome to declare all moriscos apostates, and called on the king and the government to expel them *en bloc* and immediately. Juan de Ribera, archbishop of Valencia, whose excessive zeal for evangelisation turned into hostility when this failed, demanded the expulsion of the moriscos as heretics and traitors, adding for good measure the argument that the king could profit from confiscating morisco property and from enslaving moriscos for work in the galleys and mines or from their sale abroad 'without any scruples of conscience'. Views

[11] Tulio Halperin Donghi, 'Recouvrements de civilisation: les Morisques au Royaume de Valence au XVI siècle', *Annales. Economies. Sociétés. Civilisations*, xi (1956), 154–82; for the quotation see p. 178.

of this kind were not well received in Rome, and they were not shared by all clerics, some of whom advocated a policy of patient assimilation, or by the church as an institution, which did not have an official opinion. In government circles, too, there was some division of opinion. reflected in the Council of State, between the majority who followed the advocacy of Idiáquez for total eviction and those who favoured the pleas of the duke of Infantado for the exercise of discrimination. The most committed defenders of the moriscos, of course, were self-interested ones, the aristocracy of Aragon and Valencia, on whose estates they provided the labour force as tenants or vassals. But the nobles were not the only owners of morisco property: there was another group of proprietors, urban rentiers, clergy and religious houses, who were paid extremely low quit-rents—further devalued by contemporary inflation—and who had an incentive to get rid of their tenants in order to dispose of the land more profitably.[12] As for the mass of Christian peasants, they viewed their morisco rivals with envy and resentment and regarded them as satellites of the landowing aristocracy.

At the root of the morisco problem lay a matter of demography. On the eve of the expulsion the morisco population of Spain stood at 319,000 out of a total of some 8½ million inhabitants.[13] But this 319,000 was not distributed evenly throughout the peninsula. More than 60 per cent. of the moriscos were concentrated in the south-east quarter of the country. In Valencia, where the concentration was greatest, they amounted to 135,000, or about 33 per cent. of the population, one morisco for every two Christians. In the eyes of the government, whose officials kept it extremely well informed on these matters, the problem was aggravated by the fact that the morisco population was growing more rapidly than the Christian. In Valencia, between 1565 and 1609, population growth among the moriscos was in the order of 69·7 per cent., compared with 44·7 per cent. in the non-morisco sector.[14] In Aragon a similar situation prevailed, though on a smaller scale. There the moriscos numbered some 61,000, or about 20 per cent. of the population, and again their growth rate was outstripping that of the Christians. In the area between Zaragoza and Alicante, therefore, there was a vast *morería* of some 200,000 aliens, facing a Christian population of 600,000 and growing faster than it. This was the real morisco problem, and it appeared

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 178.

[13] Domínguez Ortiz and Vincent, *op. cit.*, p. 83; for a lower estimate of morisco demography see Lapeyre, *op. cit.*, pp. 203–4.

[14] Lapeyre, *op. cit.*, p. 30. 'In 1609', it has been aptly observed, 'roughly one Valencian in three still obeyed in secret the law of Islam'. James Casey, *The Kingdom of Valencia in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1979), p. 2. The reason for the greater fecundity of moriscos is not precisely known. They seem to have married at an earlier age, but why? Was it due to Muslim customs, the precocity of young moriscos, or a communal determination to survive?

insuperable. For the two communities lived in different worlds. The towns were Christians, the suburbs morisco; the rich lands of the plains were Christian, the hill scrub and the highlands were morisco. And the two worlds did not meet.

In Castile the situation was less tense. The ancient communities of *mudéjares*, a tiny minority, had never posed a problem. The dispersion of 84,000 moriscos from Granada throughout Castile after the suppression of their revolt in 1570 slightly modified the demographic picture. Together, *mudéjares* and Granadine moriscos numbered about 110,000 or 120,000, unpopular people no doubt, but hardly a threat to Castile's 6½ million Christians. The two morisco communities were not even integrated among themselves; and they had little in common with their co-religionists in Aragon and Valencia. So it was not against this poor minority of small traders and artisans that the measure of 1609 was taken. Muslim Spain was south-eastern Spain. It was here that the real danger was seen to lie. The rapid population growth of the moriscos of Valencia and Aragon threatened soon to restore the balance of power between the two communities and eventually perhaps to tip it in favour of Islam. The expulsion of 1609, therefore, can be regarded as the second act of the Reconquest.

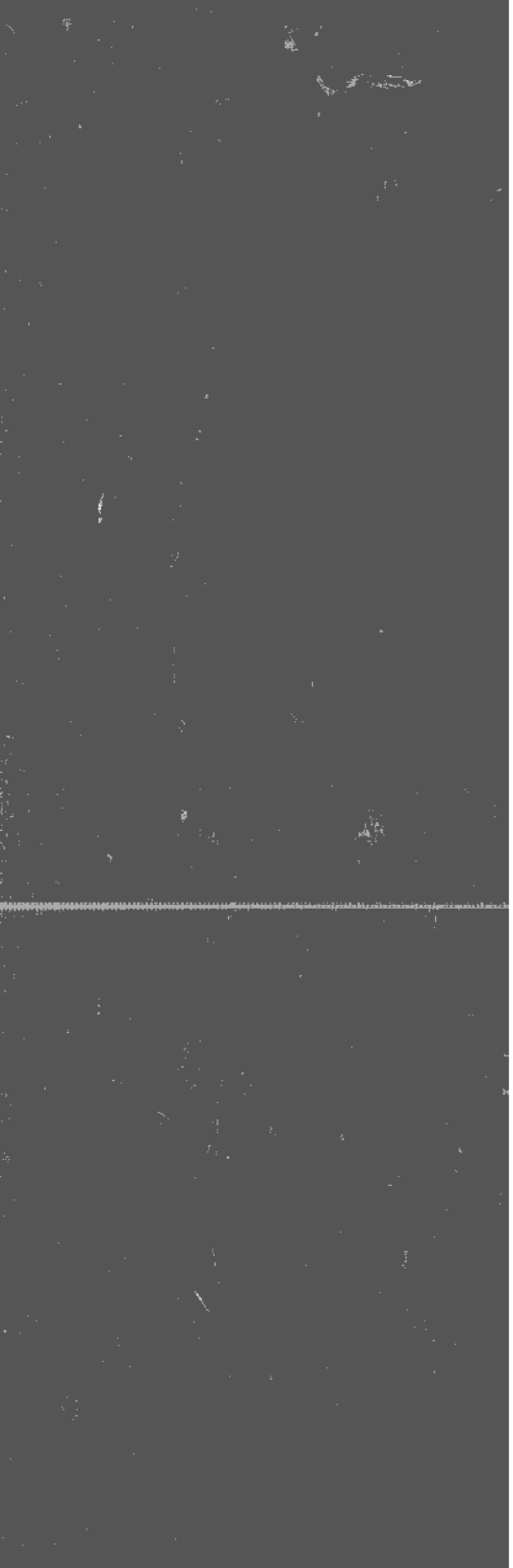
Yet there remains an element of uncertainty. In the final analysis it is difficult to identify the precise reasons why the moriscos were expelled. It was not simply the result of 'demographic pressure', least of all after the epidemic and mortality of 1596–1602, when Castile began to experience a scarcity of labour. In Valencia and Aragon, it is true, the moriscos were numerous and popularly resented. But these conditions had long existed, without motivating a policy of expulsion. This was new, and it was the responsibility of a few people: Philip III, with whom sovereignty lay, and his immediate advisers, who placed this option before him. The king took a personal interest in the evangelisation of the moriscos from the time of his visit to Valencia in 1599. Conversion of the moriscos by peaceful means remained official policy until 1608, in spite of the urgings of extremists. Then the duke of Lerma took the initiative: this was one matter on which he was an active policy maker and executive. Under his direction the Council of State debated the issue; from January 1608 the Council began to advocate expulsion, mainly on grounds of state security, and on 4 April 1609 it firmly recommended this measure to the king. Philip III accepted the advice: on 9 April it was decided to expel the moriscos from the whole of Spain, beginning with Valencia. It was here, as has been seen, that the problem of the moriscos was considered most acute, because of their numbers, their concentration in mountain fastnesses, their situation near a coast-line easily accessible from North Africa. It was logical to expel them first, before they

organised their defence or called in outside aid.[15] Preparations were begun in the utmost secrecy. The Mediterranean galleys were assembled; the Atlantic fleet was brought in; troops were mobilised. By September naval squadrons were stationed at three ports, Alfaques, Denia and Alicante; and three *tercios* withdrawn from Italy occupied strategic positions in the north and south of Valencia. On 22 September the viceroy of Valencia, the marquis of Carazena, ordered the publication of the decree of expulsion. This included a provision excepting children under four years—subsequently raised to fourteen years—if their parents agreed to their remaining; and Archbishop Ribera protested in vain that all morisco children should be reduced to slavery for the good of their souls. The decree also authorised six families out of every hundred in each village to stay behind in order to maintain 'houses, sugar-mills, rice crops and irrigation works, and to initiate the new settlers'.[16] In fact very few took advantage of this permit and it was subsequently abolished.

The landed aristocracy of Valencia, task-masters and protectors of the moriscos, had already held various meetings and organised a protest to Madrid, arguing that expulsion would mean destruction of their estates and loss of their revenue.[17] Their protest was fruitless, though Lerma had in mind some form of compensation. The moriscos were allowed to take with them their moveable property, but their houses, seeds, crops, trees and other assets were to go as compensation to their lords, with the death penalty for any act of destruction or burning. But these orders were variously interpreted, and many moriscos quickly unloaded their products and property on to the market.[18] Otherwise they caused no trouble. They quietly left their villages, and under the direction of special commissioners they made their way in long columns to the ports of embarkation.

There, from 30 September, they were herded aboard the waiting vessels, most of them foreign merchantmen attracted by the good freightage opportunities; for, as a final affront, the moriscos were forced to pay their own passage. They left in successive convoys under naval escort to North Africa. In the first twenty days of October some 32,000 moriscos were transported across the Mediterranean. Incidents were few, but those which occurred had repercussions. There were some isolated cases of robbery and violence by ships' captains; and a few groups of moriscos were attacked and robbed by

[15] Pascual Boronat, *Los moriscos españoles y su expulsión* (2 vols., Valencia, 1901), ii, 150–51.
[16] Boronat, *op. cit.*, ii, 190–93; Julio Caro Baroja, *Los moriscos del reino de Granada* (Madrid, 1957), pp. 232–33.
[17] Boronat, *op. cit.*, ii, 183–84.
[18] Reglà, *op. cit.*, p. 231.



Arabs in North Africa. When news of these incidents reached Valencia it heightened the fears of those who had not yet embarked. Rebellion broke out on 20 October in the remote valley of Ayora in the south of the kingdom; about 6,000 insurgents defied the authorities and entrenched themselves in the wilderness of the Muela de Cortes. Five days later a more serious uprising of 15,000 moriscos occurred in an area near the coast of southern Valencia, and the rebels took up positions in the valley of Laguar.[19] The government sent in the *tercios* and the local militia, and meanwhile continued the embarkations in order to stop the revolt spreading. By the end of November the rebels were overwhelmed; those who survived the slaughter were either sent to the galleys or summarily expelled. By now even the most recalcitrant were resigned to their fate, and few escaped the efficient machinery which operated the expulsion. In the first three months of the operation 116,022 moriscos were transported to North Africa. And when, by 1612, the stragglers and escapees had been rounded up, a total of 117,464 had been expelled from Valencia.

The operation was equally efficient in Aragon, where it was conducted in the course of 1610, once the security of Valencia was assured. Here too the aristocracy protested, and here too their protests were in vain.[20] By mid-September some 41,952 moriscos, including a few from Catalonia, had been expelled to North Africa via the port of Alfaques. The rest of the Aragonese moriscos, some 13,470, were sent over the Pyrenees into France, to be shepherded by exasperated French authorities to the port of Agde for shipment across the Mediterranean, and forced to pay transit dues as well as sea fares.[21] From Andalucía, where the moriscos were more difficult to identify because of their relative affluence, 36,000 were expelled by mid-1610. In the rest of Castile the operation was not a problem in point of numbers but was complicated by the existence of two groups of moriscos, the ancient *mudéjares* and the more recent emigrés from Granada. First, by decree of 28 December 1609, they were given the opportunity of emigrating voluntarily via France to Tunis. Many took advantage of this, and the remainder were expelled by decree of 10 June 1610, departing via the ports of southern Spain. By mid-1600 about 32,000 had left.

Although Spain had now expelled most of its moriscos, the operation was not absolutely complete. It took from 1611 to 1614 to round up the stragglers, who were particularly elusive in Castile. Those who regarded themselves as true Spaniards made desperate efforts to avoid expulsion, either by litigation

[19] Florencio Janer, *Condición social de los moriscos de España: causas de su expulsión y consecuencias que esta produjo en el orden económico polltico* (Madrid, 1857), pp. 321–26; Boronat, *op. cit.*, ii, 225–27, 234–37, 557–60.

[20] Boronat, *op. cit.*, ii, 296–98; Reglà, *op. cit.*, pp. 252–55.

[21] Lapeyre, *op. cit.*, pp. 100–5; Reglà, *op. cit.*, pp. 258–62.

or by sheltering under ecclesiastical authority. Some of these were successful; others managed to remain illegally, and yet others returned clandestinely.[22] Gradually the mopping-up operations were completed, and by 1614 from the whole of the country some 275,000 moriscos had been expelled.[23] Most of them had gone to North Africa, to Morocco, Oran, Algiers and Tunis, where they got a mixed reception but eventually contributed their industry and skills to their new homelands. A few made their way to Salonica and Constantinople.[24] Perhaps about 10,000 managed to remain in Spain.

Spain had finally settled her account with Islam. But how was she herself affected by this vast diaspora? Most of the *arbitristas* considered the event to be of slight consequence for the economy of the country as a whole: the government itself professed indifference to the economic implications of the measure; and when the Council of Castile reported on the state of the nation in 1619 it did not even refer to the expulsion. This complacency was probably justified in the case of Castile, where the demographic and economic consequences of the expulsion could only have been slight. While the diligence and efficiency of the moriscos are not in doubt, it is a myth that they were the only productive classes in Spain; most of the trades and occupations in which they specialised, including irrigation, were also practised by Spaniards. And even in Valencia they had not been the only efficient farmers. The expulsion, of course, represented a loss of capital as well as of labour, for in spite of regulations to the contrary the moriscos sold as much of their property as they could and took the cash with them; but it is impossible to quantify this flight of capital. If we are to judge by wage and price levels in those sectors of the economy where the moriscos had been most productive, the expulsion had little material consequence, even in Valencia, and economic activity continued undisturbed.[25]

When all this has been said, however, the fact remains that the expulsion of the moriscos was a major event in Spanish history which cannot be explained away by reference to wage and price levels in certain districts. The loss of 4 per cent. of the population of Spain may seem small, but it represented a higher percentage of the working population, for the moriscos did not include hidalgos, soldiers, priests, vagrants or beggars, and most observers

[22] Reglà, *op. cit.*, pp. 407–15.

[23] Lapeyre, *op. cit.*, 204–5.

[24] Caro Baroja, *op. cit.*, 249–57.

[25] Earl J. Hamilton, 'The Decline of Spain', *Economic History Review*, viii (1937–38), 168–79, who indicates that wages in morisco-type occupations and prices of commodities, such as sugar and rice, which moriscos had produced underwent little significant change in the years after the expulsion. Hamilton's article, which is somewhat exaggerated in its interpretation and unreliable in its morisco population figures, was a reaction against previous historiography; a more balanced note has been struck in the works of Reglà, Lapeyre, Domínguez Ortiz and Vincent, and Casey.

agreed that the quality of morisco work was superior. In some places the deportation of the moriscos left a sizeable gap in the labour and tax-paying force, and here depopulation was a reality for many decades to come. Certain occupations suffered particular labour shortage and consequent rise of wages, such as silk production, market gardening, and transport. The most critical loss of population, of course, occurred in eastern Spain. Aragon lost a sixth of its population, Valencia a third. No doubt resettlement brought some demographic recovery to Valencia, through immigration from Castile and Aragon, though most of the new settlers came from immediate neighbourhoods. The fact remained that in Valencia the expulsion added itself to general economic poverty and underdevelopment to cause a long depopulation. Forty years later, in 1646, Valencia remained depopulated.[26] Not only had the old morisco villages disappeared, but most Christian ones were depleted too; not only were the highland regions still empty but even the fertile *huertas* around Játiva and Gandia were underpopulated compared with their situation in 1609. With the exceptions of the province of Castellón and the *huerta* of Valencia, every region of the kingdom of Valencia suffered a loss of vital manpower. Many of these areas were too poor to attract new settlers; and much morisco land was too heavily charged with ground rents and other dues to make it a good investment.

Valencia remained a subsistence economy, though the basic subsistence crop was now wheat, not the inferior grains favoured by the moriscos. In some regions sugar cane production suffered severe depression, later compounded by competition from Portuguese and Spanish American sugar. The rice crop also diminished, although silk and wine production, presumably the work of Old Christians, increased and approached commercialisation. If wage and price levels remained unchanged anywhere it was only in the capital of Valencia, and this was not typical, for with fewer moriscos the capital was less affected by the expulsion. Elsewhere there is evidence that agricultural wages rose steeply and further encouraged the trend towards rentier status on the part of the big landowners. Poor farmers and peasants had the illusion of greater prosperity from the removal of competition and the new wage levels, but many of them inherited from the moriscos debts and credit for agricultural supplies and cattle, which often amounted to sizeable sums. Such debts were not cancelled but immediately claimed by the crown as its own and subsequently handed over to the nobles, whom it regarded as the real victims of the expulsion.

Almost all the seigneurial lords in Valencia, and to a lesser extent in Aragon,

[26] Boronat, *op. cit.*, ii, 324–54; Reglà, *op. cit.*, pp. 419–22; Lapeyre, *op. cit.*, 71–73; Domínguez Ortiz and Vincent, *op. cit.*, pp. 201–223; Casey, *op. cit.*, pp. 6, 34, 58–61.

had mortgaged their morisco property up to the hilt; the mortgagees were usually private investors and ecclesiastical communities who were thereby assured of a regular income charged on seigneurial revenue. Now the seigneurial proprietors were driven to demand from new tenants extremely heavy rents or else to default on their payments to creditors. The government attempted to compensate the landlords by assigning them ownership of morisco property and reducing the interest rate on mortgages, but neither of these expedients was adequate. So the landowners fell back on charging the few incoming tenants excessive rents, which only deterred other settlers; and they still failed to meet their mortgage payments. Another group of creditors hit by the expulsion were those who had invested directly in agriculture by providing credit to morisco farmers. For many creditors the revenue from morisco agriculture was their only income. As most of them were ecclesiastical communities and middle-income groups in the towns it is clear that the effects of the expulsion extended far beyond the countryside.[27] It was a further blow at the middle sectors in Spanish society and a further disincentive to investment in an already under-capitalised agriculture.

While the seigneurial lords of Valencia, with their thousands of morisco vassals, were severely affected by the expulsion, this was not the first blow to their prosperity. Self-destruction was their worst enemy. Long before 1609 the family fortunes of many noble houses had been damaged by the simple fact that they lived beyond their means, indulged in excessive luxury consumption, and administered their estates inefficiently. A family like the Borjas, dukes of Gandía, were so heavily mortgaged that they could not possibly keep up interest payments and they were literally bankrupt by 1604. The expulsion of the moriscos came as the final blow, and paradoxically it enabled many nobles to escape from their financial difficulties and start afresh. With the help of the crown, the interest rates on their mortgages were lowered from 10 to 5 per cent., while they were authorised to impose the same obligations and charges on the new settlers as had been due from the moriscos. Some landowners were able to increase their holdings from morisco spoils; others, the feudal *senyors*, were more interested in strengthening their claims to agrarian production than in modernising agrarian property. In one way or another, the expulsion of the moriscos was turned to some advantage by the Valencian aristocracy. Yet in spite of the compensations in land and finance which they received, they did not recover the great prosperity they had enjoyed in the sixteenth century. Their new receipts, in spite of higher dues from their vassals after 1609, did not compare in real

[27] On the mortgage implications of the expulsion see Reglà, *op. cit.*, pp. 417–43, and the same author's, 'La expulsión de los moriscos y sus consecuencias en la economía valenciana', *Hispania*, xxiii (1963), 200–18.

terms with the old; their debts encumbered them for the rest of the century; and if they survived at the top of society, they did so with the help of the crown and as loyal servants of the crown.[28] Valencia remained a conservative oligarchic society, in which under the king's government a relatively small aristocracy concentrated in their hands economic and social power.

As an administrative exercise the expulsion of the moriscos could hardly be faulted. Few government machines in Europe could have collected the statistical information on which it was based, or have organised the assembly and transport of so many people.[29] This was one test which the Spanish bureaucracy passed with vigour and efficiency; to conduct an operation of this magnitude and complexity was a sign of strength not of stagnation. Even the much-maligned Lerma emerged with credit—as an administrator if not as a policy-maker. It was an example, moreover, of central policy and direction reaching effectively into the provinces, on this occasion at least belying the usual criticism of Spanish government. This aspect of the operation had implications beyond the problem of the moriscos.

The expulsion of the moriscos was a policy decided in Castile and executed by Castile. To this extent it further altered the balance of forces within the peninsula. From the beginning of Philip II's reign the power of Castile had over-shadowed the eastern kingdoms: to finance the policy of Spain was to control the policy of Spain. But the government of Philip II had been careful not to encroach on the rights and resources of the non-Castilian parts of the nation. Now, by expelling the moriscos from Aragon and Valencia, Madrid was attacking the immunity of these kingdoms and increasing the disequilibrium between the centre and the periphery. This meant in effect an attack on the non-Castilian aristocracy. In its origin the aristocracy of Aragon was a military aristocracy, with pronounced feudal and seigneurial characteristics, owing its initial existence to its control over a large morisco population.[30] During the second half of the sixteenth century the feudal power of the higher nobility had already been eroded by royal jurisdiction, which had also begun to curb the severity of private seigneurial authority.[31] The expulsion of the moriscos was a further blow at the power and wealth of the Aragonese aristocracy. The same was true of Valencia, where the higher nobility was severely hit by the fall in income from seigneurial property after 1609.[32] The *fueros* of the eastern kingdoms were essentially the possession of

[28] On the Valencian aristocracy after the expulsion see Casey, *op. cit.*, pp. 70, 125–6.
[29] Lapeyre, *op. cit.*, pp. 212–13.
[30] On the Aragonese aristocracy see Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 300–3.
[31] See *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 357–64.
[32] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 303–5.

the upper classes of the towns and countryside; to strike at the landed aristocracy, therefore, was to strike at the constitutional immunity of these regions. In the process Castile broke whatever power Aragon and Valencia possessed within the Monarchy, for it was there that the economic consequences of the expulsion were most severe. It was for this reason that the government of Castile remained indifferent to the economic arguments against expulsion. From the point of view of Castile, smarting under its defeat in the Low Countries where it alone sustained Spain's position without help from Aragon and Valencia, the policy of 1609 was not unreasonable. But this policy added two more dead weights to the empire, and made of Aragon and Valencia, as Castile had already made of the Low Countries, a liability rather than an asset to Spain.

There remained in eastern Spain one region virtually unaffected by the policy of 1609. Catalonia possessed few moriscos and on this issue at least did not enter the calculations of the central government. Catalonia's problems went deeper than the possession of a dissident minority. Indeed they were such as to justify a reappraisal of its relations with Madrid: Castile had much more reason to intervene in Catalonia than in Aragon and Valencia. Whether it was prepared to do so remained to be seen.

3. Catalonia: the Problem of Intervention

The crippling blows dealt at Aragon and Valencia in 1609 left Catalonia pre-eminent among the eastern kingdoms. Her advantage was a relative one, of course, for the Catalan economy was by no means buoyant. In the period 1599–1615 Catalan trade in the Mediterranean was receding, incapable of competing with that of France and Italy.[33] The French were actually making inroads into the Catalan domestic market. One of the reasons for this was the poor industrial performance of Catalonia; with textile production slumping, Catalonia was becoming an exporter of raw materials alone.[34] Urban society reflected these conditions. Municipal government was controlled by urban oligarchies composed largely of businessmen; and this aristocracy of the towns, with a resentment born of frustration, was only too ready to attribute its difficulties to outsiders, especially the central government. The rural sector was faring no better. Agriculture in the principality suffered from poor technique and, in certain areas, from lack of irrigation. There was, it is true, some agricultural prosperity in the first half of the seventeenth century, at least in eastern Catalonia.[35] But elsewhere production was hit

[33] Pierre Vilar, *La Catalogne dans l'Espagne Moderne* (3 vols., Paris, 1962), i, 588–92.
[34] *Ibid.*, i, 593–99. [35] *Ibid.*, i, 599–602.

by the farmers' policy of keeping output down in order to keep prices up, and by the policy of Barcelona merchants whose commercial relations with Sicily involved the import of Sicilian corn.[36] The pressure of a growing population on limited food supplies and the inability to earn a sufficiency by foreign trade led to a price rise and severe unemployment. These conditions bred banditry, as in many other Mediterranean regions. And banditry was, in part at least, an aristocratic phenomenon.

The higher aristocracy of Catalonia was almost indistinguishable from that of Castile. Few in numbers and including only one grandee, the duke of Cardona, it co-operated with the crown and in general played its part in the public life of the Monarchy.[37] But it was not typical of Catalonia. The typical Catalan noble was poor, ignorant, far removed from the life of the court with its offices and opportunities; in seventeenth-century Spain he was an anachronism. Whereas the poor *hidalgos* of northern Spain either resigned themselves to a plebeian standard of living or sallied forth in search of careers in Castile or the Indies, in trade, office or military service, the Catalan nobles showed little inclination to leave their homeland; they were rarely to be found in the Indies, the army, the central bureaucracy, or the commercial houses of Seville and Cadiz. Their alienation from the life of the nation was not due entirely to the exclusivism of Castile. It was also due to the parochialism of Catalonia. To reject the burden was to forfeit the fruits of empire. In any case the mass of the Catalan aristocracy was virtually unemployable, being more addicted to guns than to books. This petty nobility and gentry, harsh with its inferiors, narrow in its political vision, ill-qualified for office even within Catalonia, either remained unemployed or released its energies in crime and extortion. Banditry, contraband, counterfeiting money, these were the principal occupations of many of the Catalan nobility. For these men the Catalan *fueros* were a vital defence mechanism against the interference of royal officials.

The king's power in Catalonia was constitutional and contractual; the exercise of sovereignty depended on his observing the *fueros*. Philip III visited Catalonia in 1599 and held a session of the cortes.[38] In return for various concessions—he confirmed aristocratic privileges, distributed many new honours, and cancelled the arrears of taxes owed to the crown—he was given a subsidy of 1,100,000 ducats, more than twice the amount of the largest subsidy granted to his predecessor. Philip III and Lerma were content to leave

[36] Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans*, pp. 56–59.

[37] On the Catalan aristocracy see Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 305–9.

[38] On the policy of Philip III's government in Catalonia see Elliott, *op. cit.*, pp. 49–51, 65–66, 104–47, and J. Reglà, *Els segles XVI i XVII: els virreis de Catalunya* (Barcelona, 1956), 123–28.

things at that. For the moment they had little option; their preoccupations first in northern Europe then in Moorish Spain left them little room for manoeuvre in Catalonia until some years after 1609. A series of innocuous viceroys maintained a holding operation against considerable odds. The Catalan aristocracy may have been impecunious but it was not powerless. Its extensive seigneurial jurisdiction—71 per cent. of all jurisdiction in Catalonia was in private hands—was a major obstacle to royal sovereignty.[39] Its poverty was matched by that of the crown, which did not have the revenue in Catalonia, nor reserves from outside, to implement a policy. And when all else failed, the aristocracy could fall back on the so-called Catalan liberties, which it virtually monopolised in its own sectional interests. In these years a campaign against the carrying of arms, which was thought to have the benefit of cheapness, did little to restrict banditry for it was frustrated by the aristocracy with the usual invoking of the *fueros*. As Viceroy Monteleón reported in August 1603, 'the majority of these people live in a state of mutual conflict, belonging to bands and factions, which give rise to infinite excesses'. But if the crown took action then it was probably breaking some Catalan law, for as the viceroy explained, 'justice here is shackled by the laws and constitutions'.[40] The Catalans were a difficult people to govern; they resented intervention and they criticised indifference. The crown could hardly win.

During the viceregency of the marquis of Almazán (1611–15) the crisis in Catalonia reached a peak. Banditry was now feeding voraciously on the country. Bandits had their protectors, chiefly among the rural nobility, who took a commission for their services; they had their enemies, in rival bands; and neutrals were bribed or terrorised into silence. A mafia-type regime prevailed in parts of Catalonia, sustained by violence and extortion.[41] By 1615, such was the anarchy in the country, even local interests looked to the crown to rescue them. The bishop of Vic reported in 1615 that 'the people of this principality are blaming the bishops for not getting together to consider these evils [banditry] and request a remedy for them; and they say that if the king sends troops to occupy the country they will all support him in order to establish justice as in Castile and remove the perverse laws and customs which impede it'.[42] An exaggeration, no doubt, but a reflection of prevailing desperation.

At last the government of Philip III decided to act. In the post-1609 phase

[39] Elliott, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

[40] Quoted by Reglà, *Els virreis de Catalunya*, pp. 124–25.

[41] J. Carrera Pujal, *Historia política y económica de Cataluña (siglos XVI–XVIII)* (Barcelona, 1947), i, 165–75.

[42] Quoted by Reglà, *Els virreis de Catalunya*, pp. 127–28.

of policy reappraisal the moment was right from Castile's point of view: having secured peace in the Low Countries and expelled the moriscos, it had liquidated for the moment its major policy problems and was ready to turn its attention to Catalonia. The government appointed a tough viceroy, the duke of Alburquerque, a Castilian aristocrat uninhibited by constitutional ideas. Alburquerque was realist enough to appreciate that strong government could only be applied at the expense of the Catalan *fueros*; believing that what masqueraded as liberty was really licence, he announced in advance that he would 'put the entire principality in the galleys'.[43] When he took office in March 1616, in fact, he discovered that he had some allies, at least among those who valued law and order—businessmen, property owners in town and country, peasant proprietors. But he also had some enemies, and the bitterest of these was the *Diputació*, the standing commission of the cortes, supposedly the guardian of the *fueros* and the representative of the whole Catalan people; in fact it was a corrupt oligarchy serving the interests of the aristocratic sector alone. The *Diputació* was the centre of an anti-government movement on the part of discontented nobles. It was also a financial power to be reckoned with; it had an income over four times as large as that of the royal administration in Catalonia, and it was hardly a secret that its members were lining their own pockets from the tax revenue they were supposed to administer.[44]

The new viceroy set about detaining and executing delinquents on a large scale; and he reached out to frighten off their aristocratic allies by destroying the latters' castles and strongholds. Predictably there was an outcry that the constitutions were being violated; and a nervous central government, once Alburquerque was seen to have the situation under control, ordered him to observe the *fueros*. By the time he left office in 1619, however, he had restored some order out of chaos and his policy could hardly be reversed. It was continued by his successor, the duke of Alcalá, who provoked even more opposition than Alburquerque. His personal qualities were less attractive than those of his predecessor, but it was basically to his policy that interested parties in Catalonia objected. To strengthen the royal administration Alcalá decided to intensify the fiscal policy of Alburquerque and to reclaim for the crown the royal 'fifth' from those towns which were not already paying it and could not prove exemption.[45] In view of the revenue enjoyed by the *Diputació* the object was not unreasonable. Amidst growing protest Alcalá stubbornly extended the list of towns to be assessed, and in 1620 he decided to tackle Barcelona itself, including its arrears since 1599. But Barcelona refused

[43] F. Soldevila, *Història de Catalunya* (3 vols., Barcelona, 1935), ii, 262.
[44] Elliott, *op. cit.*, pp. 92, 101, 120–21.
[45] See above, p. 34.

to pay, and it was still refusing when the reign of Philip III ended in March 1621. The stand taken by Barcelona strengthened the Catalan resistance to further intervention from Castile. In the process of restoring law and order to the principality the crown and its representatives had alienated two groups, the rural aristocracy, who made an issue of the attack on firearms and the destruction of castles, and the urban oligarchies, who took their stand on resistance to the 'fifth'. Yet they themselves had no policy for the salvation of Catalonia. Who could take seriously the Catalans' plea for more royal government, given their record of impeding it? These were men who could obstruct government but were incapable of promoting it. The initiative would have to come from the central government. Philip III's administration recognised the problem, and in its general readjustment of the balance of power within the peninsula it made a tentative approach to re-ordering Castile's relations with Catalonia. But it did not have the nerve to risk a political confrontation with the principality, and the problem was left unresolved.

The attitude of Catalonia towards Castile and the central government seems to have been conditioned by an assumption—subsequently underwritten by Catalan historians—that as the Catalans did not receive the benefits of empire they could hardly be expected to share its obligations.[46] In particular Castile's monopoly of the Spanish Indies has been cited as an example of her exclusiveness, which reaped its logical reward in the alienation of Catalonia. Historically, however, the situation had not developed in this way. The Catalans asserted and practised their liberties long before Spain assumed an imperial role in Europe and America. Their opposition to Castilian laws and taxes was not the result of their exclusion from the Indies trade but preceded it.[47] Indeed the Castilians might have justly inverted the argument: the Catalans could not expect to be admitted to Castilian privileges if they rejected Castilian responsibilities. But these were, and remain, debating points. The Catalan liberties had a long history, so long in fact that they were now out of joint with the time and the place; the world in which they had been forged had little relevance to the problems of seventeenth-century Spain.

4. Castile and Portugal

The year 1609 was a critical one for Castile, and it inaugurated a new stage in the political equilibrium within the peninsula. Peace in the Low Countries gave Castile the opportunity and the incentive to eliminate the last vestige

[46] See, for example, J. Vicens Vives, *Aproximación a la historia de España* (Barcelona, 1952).
[47] On the position of the subjects of the Crown of Aragon in relation to the Indies see below, pp. 174–6.

of Islam in Spain. This involved breaking the constitutional barriers surrounding Aragon and Valencia and reducing them to Castile's will. And this in turn left Catalonia exposed in a Spain which was becoming increasingly unfavourable to the possession of special status and fiscal immunity. But 1609 was also significant for Castile's relations with Portugal. The policy of peace with the United Provinces was decided by Castile and for Castile. Portugal, whose overseas interests were particularly sensitive to international change, had no say in the conduct of her international affairs. Consequently she had no say in Spanish policy towards the United Provinces, though the latter were the greatest threat to her empire.

The population of Portugal, hit by emigration overseas and by the virulent epidemics of 1580 and 1598–99, underwent no real growth in this period, moving from about 1,100,000 in 1580 to 1,200,000 in 1640.[48] The effects of emigration were seen in periodic crises of food supplies, for there were not enough peasants to feed the growing urban centres with a sufficient margin for safety. The non-productive sectors of society—clerics, university graduates, the military and bureaucrats—were increasing in numbers. The nobility, in search of pensions and preferment, joined the service of the king at court, in the administration, or in the empire. Commerce was largely in the hands of the New Christians, nominally converts or the descendants of converts from the Jewish religion. Regarded by the Portuguese, probably justifiably, as crypto-Jews, they were persecuted by crown and Inquisition alike. They had two main avenues of escape—the purchase of immunity or emigration to Amsterdam. Those who remained performed an essential entrepreneurial function and constituted in effect a middle sector of society, though with second class status.

Although Portugal was annexed to the crown of Castile in 1580, she retained her separate identity. Philip II observed the conditions of autonomy to which he had agreed at the cortes of Thomar. Portuguese offices were reserved to Portuguese. The Portuguese empire was administered by Portugal alone and its trade monopolised by Portuguese subjects; it remained, indeed, more firmly closed to Spaniards than the Spanish empire did to Portuguese. And Portugal retained its own institutions. Sovereignty, of course, resided in the king, and he was the head of the government structure. He was represented in Lisbon by a viceroy or by a board of three governors. But their jurisdiction was limited and matters of importance had to be remitted to Madrid; there they were considered by the Council of Portugal, which produced *consultas* for the king's decision. In Lisbon there was a

[48] On Portuguese society and institutions under Habsburg rule see Damião Peres, ed., *História de Portugal* (8 vols., Barcelos, 1929–35), v, vi.

Council of State to advise the royal representatives on major items of government, but it was a purely government council without precise administrative competence. Already, before 1580, it had employed two secretaries of state, one for home affairs and one for the colonies, whose functions were to transmit the king's decisions to the appropriate agencies. Philip II retained these officials. He also retained the *Mesa da Consciencia e Ordens* (Board of Conscience and Military Orders), which was at once a tribunal and council of religious affairs and the military orders, with jurisdiction in the metropolis and the colonies. And he preserved the *Desembargo do Paço*, the supreme tribunal of the kingdom which supervised the administration of justice. He did make, however, one significant institutional change: in 1591 he replaced the *Vedores da Fazenda* by a *Conselho da Fazenda*, which now became the supreme financial tribunal. Composed of a president, four councillors and four secretaries, this council conducted day-to-day financial administration on its own initiative, though it remitted important matters to the king. As Portugal's most important financial and economic interests lay in her overseas colonies, the *Conselho da Fazenda* constituted in fact a tribunal for colonial affairs. All normal and routine decisions regarding the Portuguese empire were made in Lisbon by the *Conselho da Fazenda*, which worked in close contact with, and often included in its membership, the viceroy of Portugal; major policy decisions they would remit, with their recommendations, to the king or the Council of Portugal in Spain. Co-ordination in policy matters between these two bodies was achieved by routine correspondence between the Council of Portugal on behalf of the king and the *Conselho da Fazenda* in Lisbon.

Philip II's conservative approach to Portugal and her institutions was not continued by his successor. In 1601 the duke of Lerma created a *Junta da Fazenda*, composed of three Spaniards, with power to intervene in the *Conselho da Fazenda*. This was correctly interpreted in Portugal as an attempt to centralise financial administration in the interests of Spain and of Lerma's policy; the *Junta* was viewed with extreme mistrust, and it was abolished in 1605.[49] A further attempt to modify the structure of government was made with the creation of the *Conselho da India* (25 July 1604). The new council had a president and four councillors, and was given jurisdiction over colonial affairs, though the financial and economic business of the empire remained in the hands of the *Conselho da Fazenda*. This, too, was viewed with reservation in Portuguese government circles; the new agency clashed with the jurisdiction of the *Mesa da Consciencia e Ordens*, and it did not survive beyond 1614.[50]

[49] Fortunato de Almeida, *História de Portugal* (6 vols., Coimbra, 1922–31), v, 19–22.
[50] See F. P. Mendes da Luz, *O Conselho da India* (Lisbon, 1952), pp. 81–93, 97–195.

But there were other avenues into the Portuguese administration. Philip III began to appoint Spaniards to the Council of Portugal in Madrid and to the *Conselho da Fazenda* in Lisbon. In 1615 he attempted to appoint a Spaniard, the count of Salinas, as his representative in Portugal, but he bowed to the inevitable protest and appointed the archbishop of Lisbon instead. In 1617, however, he did in fact appoint the count of Salinas, bestowing on him the Portuguese title of marquis of Alenquer.

Behind this attempt to infiltrate the Portuguese administration lay another object. The crown's economic difficulties were causing it to look more closely at Portugal as a possible source of revenue. By the terms of the union Portugal enjoyed fiscal autonomy. But this was not impenetrable. Lerma proposed to raise a revenue by selling privileges to New Christians. They were first granted permission to leave Portugal in return for 170,000 cruzados. They were then offered the right to remain, together with a general pardon and admission to all offices in Portugal, but for a larger fee—ten times larger. Portuguese opinion was outraged: in a single deal the Spanish crown would simultaneously raise a revenue and soften up the administration. The three archbishops were sent to Spain to object. They offered the crown an alternative, 800,000 cruzados from the Portuguese towns; but there was one drawback to this—the designated taxpayers refused to pay. So Madrid reopened negotiations with the New Christians. In the new bargain the right to office was dropped and they were offered only toleration for the full sum of 1,700,000 cruzados, which was in fact converted into an exaction. There was worse to come: in 1610 all the concessions granted to the New Christians were withdrawn and the Inquisition resumed its operations. One of the few escape routes left to the New Christians was to marry into distressed Christian families, which gave them some guarantee, producing what the Inquisition called 'half-Jews' or 'quarter-Jews'.

The attempt to tap the resources of Portugal was not, for the moment, carried further. As in the case of Catalonia, the government of Philip III did not really have the courage of its own convictions. But if in the union of the crowns Portugal did not lose its administrative and fiscal independence, it did lose its control over foreign policy. And while it acquired a powerful sovereign, it also acquired a powerful enemy. Whether the Dutch would have stayed their hand against an independent Portugal indefinitely, of course, is a matter of speculation. Philip II's policy in the 1590's, when he put an embargo on Dutch shipping in the Tagus and prohibited further trade between the Portuguese and the Dutch, was possibly provocative, but it was hardly more effective than the ban on Spanish trade with the Dutch, and it may be queried whether it was the policy of embargo which drove the Dutch to go direct to the Far East for goods which they had previously procured in Lisbon and thus

initiated the Dutch attack on the Portuguese Asian empire. It can hardly be doubted that the Dutch would have made their way to the Far East even without provocation by Philip II. And if Spain brought enemies she also brought bullion to Portugal; for its trade with Asia Portugal needed a constant supply of silver, which the Spanish Indies alone could provide.[51] There was, therefore, an economic case for closer integration between the two countries. At the same time Dutch pressure in the Far East helped to precipitate a shift in Portuguese colonial interests. Although Portugal's Asian empire gradually succumbed to enemy penetration in the early seventeenth century, a second empire began to take shape in America. Brazil became the focus of increasing attention and by the 1620's had developed into a prosperous plantation colony; it possessed an expanding sugar industry, attracted growing emigration, and yielded more money to the metropolis than it cost in administration and defence.[52] Simultaneously Portuguese merchants made use of their advantageous position under the union of the crowns to ease their way into the American trade of Seville and to infiltrate into Castile's colonial possessions.[53] Although the Portuguese received no special privileges to enter Spanish America and were legally regarded as foreigners there, even in the period 1580–1640, in fact their status was much superior to that of other foreigners—unlike the English and the Dutch they were allies of Spain—and they were allowed to travel and settle in the Spanish empire with relative immunity. In the years after 1580 they were particularly active and were to be found in all parts of Spanish America, as seamen and settlers, merchants and artisans; and by the second generation they had made their way into offices in church and state. Their preference was for the Río de la Plata and Peru; and Potosí was one of their principal targets. Brazil afforded a convenient base for their operations. Portuguese exports to Brazil far exceeded the colony's needs; many of them were designed as re-exports to the Río de la Plata and, beyond the pampas and Tucumán, to Upper Peru, where they competed with legitimate Spanish trade routed via Panama and Peru; and Portuguese traffic in slaves and merchandise siphoned off quantities of silver from Potosí.

As the Portuguese shifted the focus of their imperial interests from the Far East to America, so the Dutch followed them remorselessly. The Dutch had

[51] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, 261.

[52] See C. R. Boxer, *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola* (London, 1952), pp. 1–39.

[53] On the Portuguese in Spanish America see Alice P. Canabrava, *O comércio português no Rio da Prata*, 1580–1640 (São Paulo, 1944); Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, p. 31; Lewis Hanke, 'The Portuguese in Spanish America, with special reference to the Villa Imperial de Potosí', *Revista de Historia de América*, no. 51 (1961), 1–48; Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, iv, 570.

already penetrated Spanish imperial defences at certain points.[54] From the 1580's they were active in the Caribbean; and at the beginning of the seventeenth century they began the occupation and exploitation of the salt-pans of Punta de Araya on the coast of Tierra Firme, which became a base of an extensive contraband trade until the Spaniards hit back in 1605.[55] Conditions of war or peace made little difference to the Dutch. And although the Portuguese had no say in the Spanish decision to conclude a truce with the Dutch in 1609, it may be doubted whether any other decision would have altered the balance of power overseas. The chief obstacle to the truce negotiations was Dutch insistence on a right to trade in the East and West Indies, and Spain's refusal, following her usual practice, to admit in an international treaty any statement reflecting on her colonial monopoly. But one of the reasons which forced Spain to come to terms was the success achieved by the Dutch East India Company from 1602, which had effectively breached one sector of the Iberian monopoly. Spain, unable to defend both Asia and America simultaneously, was concerned to assert its determination to preserve the latter, in which Portugal too had a stake. The fourth clause of the treaty, therefore, was worded in such a way that it could be interpreted as allowing the Dutch a relatively free hand in the East Indies but not in America.[56] This merely recognised the existing situation, for treaties could not alter facts. It also reflected the policy of the 'peace party' of the burgher oligarchs in the United Provinces, who preferred to trade in the East Indies than to fight their way into America. Consequently, during the period of the truce (1609–21), the Dutch continued their progress in Asia, consolidating the dominant position in the Indian Ocean and the Far East which they had begun to acquire in the period 1600–9.

America, however, was another matter. The treaty of 1609 implied that, whatever happened in the Far East, America was to be regarded more strictly as an Iberian preserve. This too reflected the balance of power overseas. Spain sustained her position in the New World by virtue of occupation, military defence and naval power. The Dutch might make minor inroads into the Spanish monopoly; but they could not overthrow it. There was, it is true, a 'war party' in the United Provinces which advocated an attack on South America comparable to that in South-East Asia. This party argued that the truce of 1609 should be limited to Europe, with war continuing 'beyond the line'. Through the ambiguous wording of the fourth clause of the

[54] Frédéric Mauro, *Le Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVII siècle* (1570–1670). *Étude économique* (Paris, 1960), p. 463.
[55] Engel Sluiter, 'Dutch Maritime Power and the Colonial Status Quo, 1585–1641', *Pacific Historical Review*, xi (1942), 29–41.
[56] C. R. Boxer, *The Dutch in Brazil*, 1624–54 (Oxford, 1957), p. 2.

treaty the truce was in fact virtually limited to Europe. But there was also a limit to what the Dutch could accomplish in Spanish America. The latter remained immune from penetration on a large scale. In any case, as the Dutch could trade with relative freedom to the Iberian peninsula in the years of peace, it was easier to conduct a re-export trade to Spanish America from Seville than to breach the monopoly by direct assault. Portugal, however, was more vulnerable than Spain. So Dutch activity in America tended to focus on Brazil. During the years of truce Dutch trade with Brazil made a notable spurt.[57] The Spanish crown issued constant and explicit prohibitions of foreign trade with the colony, but its policy was subverted from within Portugal itself. The Dutch traded with Brazil through the connivance of Portuguese officials and of Portuguese merchants—New Christians in most cases—in Vianna and Oporto; it was they who provided the necessary facilities of cover agents and a flag of convenience.[58] Dutch merchants estimated that by the 1620's they had secured between one-half and two-thirds of the carrying trade between Brazil and Europe. By the end of the truce fifteen ships were being built yearly in the United Provinces for the Brazil trade alone, while some 50,000 bales of sugar, apart from Brazil-wood, cotton and hides, were being imported in Dutch vessels by way of Portugal. Most of this Brazilian produce was shipped via Oporto and Vianna, where duties on imports and re-exports were substantially lower than at the monopoly port of Lisbon. There was also an outward flow of traffic, for Brazil was a market for Dutch linens and textiles. A sector of opinion in the United Provinces wanted more than a contraband trade with Brazil: it sought the colony's annexation. This was viewed with alarm by the 'peace party', which believed that a profitable trade would only be damaged by war with the Iberian powers. According to one Dutch writer, the king of Spain regarded Portuguese Asia 'as his concubine, who can shift for herself if need be, but he does not count the cost of maintaining America, which he regards as his lawful wife, of whom he is exceedingly jealous and firmly resolved to maintain inviolate'.[59] And Dutch critics of an expedition to Brazil in the 1620's were convinced that the Spanish government would react more vigorously towards an attack on America than it had done in the Far East.

Portuguese opinion, too, disillusioned with the union of the crowns, subsequently tended to attribute Portuguese losses in the Far East to Spanish neglect. The charge was less than just to Spain. By the terms of the union the empires of the two powers remained independent, their burdens and their

[57] Mauro, *op. cit.*, p. 261.
[58] Boxer, *Dutch in Brazil*, p. 20.
[59] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 16.

fruits in separate possession. This was what Portugal wanted. It was easy for the Dutch to identify the weaker member of the partnership and to focus their attack accordingly. In any case, Portugal's Asian empire, being essentially a trading complex with the minimum of political dominion, was not an easy object to defend by conventional methods of imperial defence, such as could be applied in America. There was little to prevent other trading powers moving in, if they had sufficient maritime resources. Spain could hardly be held responsible for failing to defend two empires at once. This was recognised at the time. There was no sign of resentment against Spain among the Portuguese officials administering and defending their Asian empire, and it seems to have been taken for granted that there was a division of labour over the defence of their respective possessions. The test of relations between Spain and Portugal would come if the Dutch attacked Brazil; then it would be seen if Spain had the will and the ability to come to the assistance of a Portuguese dominion situated within the heart of the Iberian monopoly. Meanwhile, however, Spaniards were taking note that while they possessed no legal status, much less privilege, in the Portuguese empire, the Portuguese were swarming over the empire of Spain. Again this raised the question, in Castilian minds at least, should not those who received benefits assume obligations? The government of Philip III was aware of the question but left it unanswered.

CHAPTER IV

OLIVARES, CASTILE AND IMPERIAL SPAIN

1. Philip IV and the Rule of Olivares

Philip III died prematurely (31 March 1621), leaving the government of Spain and its empire to his son, a youth of sixteen, who had yet to be introduced to affairs of state and was already dominated by his childhood mentor, Gaspar de Guzmán, count of Olivares. The accession of Philip IV, therefore, was accompanied by his virtual abdication. His precipitate induction into kingship was enough in itself to cause him to reach desperately for the guiding hand of a powerful minister; and the habit of relying on the judgment of Olivares acquired in the early years of the reign proved difficult to outgrow. When, by about 1630, he had gained some maturity and experience and was in a position to question the decisions taken in his name, it was too late to assert his independence, had he so wished; for, under pressure of foreign wars and domestic crises, Spanish policy had become committed to certain objectives which were difficult to reverse and which the king could only leave to the government machine and the man who ruled it.

Modern historiography has attempted to rescue Philip IV from the obloquy heaped on the later Habsburgs.[1] Contemporaries certainly recognised him as an improvement on his father, if not in appearance—he had the pendulous lower lip and exaggerated jaw characteristic of the Habsburgs—at least in intellectual and political virtues. After the inertia and corruption of the previous reign the new king was hailed as a leader and a reformer. Popular enthusiasm was reflected even by the satirist Quevedo: 'His actions promise another Charles V; his words and decrees recall his grandfather; his religion reflects his father'.[2] He himself claimed that, having served no apprenticeship in kingship, he was forced to learn it as he went along, by secretly attending council meetings, by reading history, and by examining 'all the reports

[1] There are few general studies of the reign. One of the first modern historians to attempt a reappraisal was A. Cánovas del Castillo, *Estudios del reinado de Felipe IV* (Madrid, 1888, 2nd ed. 2 vols., Madrid, 1927), a valuable work still. Martin Hume, *The Court of Philip IV. Spain in Decadence* (London, 1907) is based on original documentation and has considerable utility, in spite of its defects of analysis. For a character description of Philip IV see José Deleito y Piñuela, *El declinar de la monarquía española* (4th ed., Madrid, 1966), pp. 46–63.

[2] Quoted J. Juderías, *Don Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas. La época, el hombre, las doctrinas* (Madrid, 1923), p. 110.

which come from the councils, juntas and individual ministers on every matter concerning my kingdoms'.[3] And it is true that he did a considerable amount of paper work, annotating the conciliar material with his comments and decrees, sometimes extensive and in his own hand.[4] But these efforts were sporadic and inconclusive, little more than signs of periodic remorse, a substitute for policy-making not a means towards it. Philip IV was essentially a courtier, with a courtier's tastes and interests. His notorious patronage of literature, the theatre and the fine arts was that of a dilettante with too much leisure and too little judgment. He was even more interested in outdoor sports, particularly equestrian sports and bull-fighting. But his passion for horses yielded second place to his passion for women, which turned him into a jaded voluptuary well before middle age. His relentless self-indulgence marred his family life both with his first wife, Isabel of Bourbon, and his second, Mariana of Austria; and while he had great difficulty in providing an heir to the throne, his progeny of bastards numbered between twenty and thirty.

It has been argued that Philip IV delegated power to Olivares not out of feebleness of mind and will but because he believed that Olivares was the best man for the job.[5] But this is not the whole story. Philip IV was basically frivolous and irresponsible, a king who preferred private pleasure to public duty. He sought in the able and determined Olivares the counterpoise for his own irresolution and lack of judgment. It is true that his decision to delegate power corresponded to the conditions of seventeenth-century government, and was a necessary admission that the king of Spain could no longer administer the affairs of his vast empire unaided.[6] His freedom of choice, moreover, was limited, for the higher aristocracy of Castile would not tolerate supreme power going to anyone outside their own ranks. Olivares was the only member of the ruling class whom Philip IV knew well enough to trust. These were the grounds on which he subsequently justified his abject reliance on a favourite minister, contrasting the man of his choice with the many 'pernicious ministers' who surrounded him, 'those people who to my way of thinking are more concerned with their own interests than with the service of God and the king'.[7] Self-justification of this kind, however, could not disguise the fact that Philip IV did more than delegate

[3] Quoted in Cánovas, *Estudios*, i, 231.

[4] For attempts to rehabilitate Philip IV based on this kind of evidence see Cánovas, *Estudios*, i, 157–59, 259, 297, and Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV* (Madrid, 1960), *passim*. Cánovas describes Philip IV as a *rey papelista*.

[5] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, p. 9.

[6] See above, pp. 25–7.

[7] Philip IV to Sor María de Agreda, 30 January 1647, in Appendix VIII, Valiente, *Los validos en la monarquía española del siglo XVII*, pp. 181–84.

power: he abdicated control. This is implied in the barbed advice given by the same Quevedo who had once welcomed the young king. To give political power to a *valido*, argued Quevedo, was to alienate sovereignty: 'Whoever relieves the king of the work and the fatigue of his office is a thief, for he takes away the honour, pride and fruits of that office'; and again, 'the minister who lets the king sleep does not serve him, he buries him'. Quevedo addressed himself directly to Philip IV: 'Most powerful, mighty and excellent Lord: kings are workers, and you are worth no more than you labour; to be idle is to forfeit your wages'.[8] Philip IV's neglect of public duty became an obsession with Quevedo and he returned to the theme in one of his most mordant verses:

Filipo, que el mundo aclama
Rey del infiel tan temido,
Despierta, que por dormido
Nadie te teme, ni te ama.[9]

The man who relieved Philip IV of these burdens was Gaspar de Guzmán, son of Enrique de Guzmán, ambassador and viceroy under Philip II.[10] The family was ambitious, and its pretension probably outstripped its resources. These, however, were substantial enough. The Guzmán were a junior branch of a famous noble dynasty headed by the duke of Medina Sidonia; they came from Andalucía where they had estates in the region of Seville, allegedly yielding the incumbent an income of some 60,000 ducats a year. But they aspired to higher things, and for years Gaspar de Guzmán, as his father before him, sought to convert his peerage of Castile into a grandeeship of Spain. After a socially, if not academically, productive career at the University of Salamanca—as contemporaries remarked, he became Rector before he even graduated—he succeeded to his father's title and estates in 1607 and thenceforth devoted his energy and patrimony to penetrating the source of power, the court of Philip III. In 1615 he received the first return on his investment: he was appointed to the household of Prince Philip, the heir to the throne, who first apparently regarded his dominating senior with some aversion but soon came to rely on him in every detail of his life. Olivares secured complete control of the young prince's household, packing it with his own

[8] *Política de Dios y Gobierno de Cristo*, in *Obras* (*Biblioteca de autores españoles*, 23, Madrid, 1946), pp. 23, 69, 72.

[9] 'Philip, whom the world acclaims, king who keeps the infidel in fear, wake up! For while you sleep no one fears you and no one loves you!' Quoted in Hume, *op. cit.*, p. 355, n. 1.

[10] Olivares is studied in the distinguished 'psychological' biography by Gregorio Marañón, *El conde-duque de Olivares* (*la pasión de mandar*) (Madrid, 1936, 4th ed., 1959), a valuable source of personal detail but lacking in political content. This, and much more, is supplied by Elliott, *The Revolt of the Catalans*, pp. 193 ff.

Philip IV, 1631 by Velázquez

creatures. And as he monopolised the heir to the throne, so he indoctrinated him against Lerma and then against the remains of the Lerma faction. These were scattered in 1621 when Philip succeeded his father and Olivares succeeded Uceda. With his pupil on the throne Olivares received all the offices and honours he desired; in 1625 he was made duke of Sanlucar la Mayor, and came to be known universally as the count duke. But what he desired above all was political power.

On the political front Olivares moved at first with caution, overtly deferring to the greater experience of his uncle, Baltasar de Zúñiga, and careful not to offend the susceptibilities of the new king, who seems to have had a brief period of aversion to rule by *valido*. But, as the king's closest friend, his tactical position was assured. Gradually and discreetly he began to intervene in matters of government, gaining confidence as he went along. By August 1622 he was a member of a junta consisting of all the presidents of councils whose function was to advise the king on major items of policy. There was now talk of disagreement between Olivares and Zúñiga, who was regarded by courtiers and officials as merely the uncle of the new favourite.[11] Zúñiga's death (7 October 1622) clarified the situation. The king now handed power officially and exclusively to Olivares, making it clear that he alone enjoyed his absolute confidence.

Now in his early thirties, Olivares was dark and heavy in appearance, with hard eyes and an imperious bearing. His shortcomings were there for all to see —ruthless ambition, obstinacy, impatience with fools and opponents, and dangerous illusions induced by the power he wielded. But his qualities, too, were on a large scale. He possessed great political vision and he was capable of great magnanimity. In the king's service he worked himself to a standstill. He lived in the royal palace and attended to his master's slightest whim as well as to every aspect of government. He worked non-stop from early morning to late at night, interviewing, attending councils and juntas, reading dispatches, writing memoranda, and seeing the king.[12] He brought to his office not only dedication but also a marked instinct for absolute rule and the ability to go with it. If there was a field of government which he did not understand, such as finance, he mastered it quickly. If there was an urgent problem which officials could not resolve he stayed up all night to resolve it. In a sense his vigour and impatience were his undoing, for he tried to take short-cuts to objectives which required a more elaborate approach. His vision of a greater Spain was too ambitious for the period of recession in which he lived, and he himself had no talent for political manoeuvre and compromise.

Unlike many seventeenth-century *validos* and ministers, Olivares was more

[11] Marañón, *op. cit.*, pp. 43–52.
[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 167–72.

interested in government than in patronage. Philip IV gave him almost exclusive power in matters of patronage, and he used it, to reward friends and punish enemies. But he did not like it and he tried to relinquish it, believing that it was a matter for the king, while he concentrated on policy and government. He was quite explicit about this, and one of his reasons was that control of patronage was the mark of a *valido*, while he preferred to be a minister. In a paper which he wrote for the king (4 September 1626) he argued that if the king assumed control of patronage 'there would be no need for the name and office of *privado*, for this is its essential feature. . . . At the same time your Majesty's ministers would be relieved of the lengthy negotiations which patronage involves and would be able to concentrate on your royal service'.[13] Olivares seems to have sought a working partnership and a division of labour between himself and the king. But this, he recognised, depended on the king doing much more work than he had hitherto done: 'the problems of government are such that your Majesty cannot evade assuming your share of the burden, under pain of grave and mortal sin'. Olivares never sought to reduce the king to a cipher; nor did he aspire to a *valimiento*, which, like many of his contemporaries, he seems to have regarded with distaste. He preferred power to prestige, politics to patronage. He saw himself in effect as a prime minister, an office which Spanish government needed but did not possess. In default of a single great office of state, therefore, Olivares had to acquire a number of offices in order to buttress his position and give it legal form. He was not entirely devoid of acquisitive motives, but he was not as greedy as Lerma and he was primarily interested in the institutional content of his offices.

One title to which he was particularly attached was that of *Canciller Mayor y Registrador de las Indias*, granted by the king on 27 July 1623.[14] This was an office which had long since lapsed and was now revived in order to give Olivares a base in an important institution, the Council of the Indies, and to enable him to share its jurisdiction over Spain's overseas empire.[15] At the other end of the scale he formalised his influence over the local government of Castile through the offices of *procurador* in the cortes and *regidor* in the towns represented there; these offices enabled him to intervene not only in the cortes but also in the internal affairs of the constituent towns. His most important office, of course, was that of Councillor of State, which gave him legal entry to the highest policy matters. He became a member of the Council in 1622 and soon came to dominate it. The extent of his dominance is seen in the fact that he did not normally attend, though when he did his

[13] Olivares to Philip IV, 4 September 1626, in Valiente, *op. cit.*, Appendix V, pp. 171–74.
[14] *Ibid.*, Appendix IV, pp. 162–70.
[15] See Schäfer, *El Consejo real y supremo de las Indias*, i, 217–27.

interventions were extensive and decisive. They were equally decisive when he operated, as a king would do, from outside the Council. He controlled its assembly, its agenda and, by making known his opinions in advance, its decisions. If, in spite of all this, its *consultas* still did not meet with his approval, he sent them back for revision without even showing them to the king. What the king finally received, therefore, if he received it at all, was a *consulta* censored by Olivares, and what he gave in return was a decision advised by Olivares. The secretaries of state, whose status had already been eroded in the previous reign, were further demoted by the role of the count duke.[16] They were now merely officials who handled his communications for him and furthered the details of his policy. It was he who controlled relations between the various councils and co-ordinated their activities. He was particularly interested in the Council of Finance, which had to find the resources for his policy, and those brusk and admonitory decrees descending so frequently on the Council, though signed by Philip IV, bear all the marks of Olivares-inspired documents.

The junta system, which had taken firm root in the previous reign, proliferated even more under Philip IV.[17] It is usually regarded as a device by which Olivares side-stepped the councils and placed administration in the hands of his creatures. Whether he needed to do this is debatable. In any case he did not invent the system nor was it necessarily a sinister development. It probably represented no more than the perennial habit of administrators who have to work through committees to create sub-committees for specialised tasks. Most of the new juntas had administrative, not political, implications. The *junta de armadas* specialised in naval affairs, the *junta de presidios* in frontier garrisons. Inevitably most of the juntas were concerned with raising or administering money. Some, such as the *junta de media anata*, the *junta del papel sellado*, the *junta de donativos*, were created for the administration of extraordinary revenues which the Council of Finance's machinery did not cover. Others were designated *juntas de medios* and ordered to find the 'means' to resolve the ever-present financial problems. These were usually composed of councillors of Castile and Finance, with a few ecclesiastics and Olivares; their object was to circumvent the ponderous and frequently unimaginative councils and to find answers to urgent questions of the day. They were smaller in composition than the councils and drawn from a fairly restricted number of public figures.[18] The *junta de estado* was in a different category, and it is not easy to discern the difference of jurisdiction

[16] See above, pp. 26–7.
[17] See above, pp. 22–3.
[18] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 185–86. There was even a curious *junta de conciencia*, created in 1643, to consider the justification of new taxes, particularly as they affected the church.

between it and the Council of State. Both dealt with the same matters, mainly foreign policy, and some members of the Council also belonged to the junta. The junta, like the Council, depended for its agenda on items submitted to it by the king or Olivares, and, like the Council, it directed its *consultas* to the king for action in fact by Olivares. Perhaps it was intended that the junta should provide a second opinion on *consultas* which Olivares considered had not been sufficiently aired in Council. Or perhaps it was an attempt to endow the *valido* with a type of council of his own, meeting in his private apartment, more flexible than the Council of State, and directly subordinate to his will.[19]

Possessed of the main instruments of power and secure in the backing of the king, Olivares set the direction and controlled the momentum of Spanish policy for the next twenty years. In domestic affairs he was essentially a reformer. But domestic affairs were of secondary interest to him, a means to an end. His prime concern was the preservation of Spain as a world power, and this he conceived as a problem not of internal resources but of foreign and military policy.

2. Spain and the Thirty Years War

Olivares viewed the international role of Spain with the eyes of a traditionalist. He did not question the inherited ideas of Spanish foreign policy nor did he create new ones. He simply sought to apply received doctrine with greater vigour and more powerful resources. In a paper dated 28 November 1621, for the advice of the new king, 'the greatest monarch in the world in kingdoms and possessions', he reminded him of his essential duty: 'Almost all the kings and princes of Europe are jealous of your greatness. You are the main support and defence of the Catholic religion; for this reason you have renewed the war with the Dutch and with the other enemies of the Church who are their allies; and your principal obligation is to defend yourself and to attack them'.[20] Although this policy is frequently described as Spanish 'imperialism', in fact it was empty of aggressive content and of expansionist aims.[21] Spain had neither the desire nor the means to acquire new dominions in southern, central or northern Europe, and encroachment on French sovereignty and territory was now unthinkable. Why then, Spaniards were never tired of asking, did their policy provoke such suspicion and hostility throughout Europe?

[19] Valiente, *op. cit.*, pp. 81–83.

[20] 'Documento de gobierno del Conde-Duque de Olivares al Rey, en 1621', in Marañón, *op. cit.*, pp. 438–40.

[21] For a sensible discussion of Spanish foreign policy on the eve of the Thirty Years War see Carter, *The Secret Diplomacy of the Habsburgs, 1598–1625*, pp. 23–49.

The answer lay in two facts. First, Spain was an 'imperial' power in Europe in the sense that she possessed dominions outside her metropolis, in Italy and in the Low Countries. Secondly, to preserve communications between herself and these possessions she had to cut across spheres of interest and influence jealously guarded by other powers. The situation was aggravated by the conviction abroad that Spain was motivated by an aggressive Catholicism as well as imperialism. The conviction was largely misplaced: while Spanish statesmen might piously invoke religious arguments, they were under no illusions about the possibility of extending Catholicism by force. Here too, as with political dominion, they spoke only of defending existing positions. There was some justification for their attitude. Seventeenth-century Spain had inherited certain possessions in Europe which would have been difficult to relinquish even had she so wished. Most of these possessions were not ready for national independence, and it was arguable that no power had a better title to them than Spain. The one flaw in the argument was the United Provinces, which Spain regarded as rebel provinces but which by any realistic standards were a sovereign state. But even here Spain could invoke arguments of legitimate defence. For the Dutch were ready to subvert the Spanish position in the southern Netherlands and they waged outright war on the overseas possessions of the Iberian partners. At stake in the Low Countries, therefore, was imperial defence. And from the basic premise of defence in the Low Countries the rest of Spanish foreign policy flowed with a remorseless logic. To prevent the isolation of the Low Countries Spain was led to intervention in Germany, a break with England, conflict in northern Italy and eventually war with France. In the early seventeenth century Spain lost secure control of the overland military corridor so vital to the Army of Flanders. The recovery of France after 1595 and her resumption of an anti-Spanish foreign policy was to result by 1631 in French domination of the bridgeheads into Italy and Germany, and Spain's loss of her traditional military highways. Spain could not accept this with equanimity.

Spain's response to the outbreak of the Thirty Years War in 1618 was carefully defined. To the emperor she sent financial subsidies and a token force of Spanish troops; these were present at the battle of the White Mountain in November 1620 when the imperial army defeated the Protestant forces, put the Elector Palatine to flight, and crushed the Bohemian revolt. Meanwhile Spain had directed her principal military effort to targets closer to her immediate interests. In 1619 a Spanish army from Lombardy marched to defend Alsace and the Spanish Road for the Habsburgs. In July 1620 Spanish troops under the duke of Feria, governor of Milan, occupied the Alpine valley of the Valtelline, an essential pass linking the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs, and an equally important passage for Spanish troops on

their way from Milan to the Low Countries.[22] In September the powerful Spanish army of the Low Countries, under its distinguished commander, Ambrosio Spinola, struck quickly into western Germany, crossed the Rhine and occupied the Lower Palatinate. The object of this operation was not primarily to deprive the Elector Palatine of his patrimony while he was absent fighting the forlorn battles of the Bohemians. It was to safeguard the communications of the Low Countries with allied positions in Germany and with Spanish positions in northern Italy by securing control of the passage of the Rhine.

Spain's presence in the Lower Palatinate was resented by the German princes, including the Catholic electors and the duke of Bavaria, who had himself acquired the Upper Palatinate and wanted the rest. But it was regarded by Spain as a place of great strategic importance, not least because the Dutch truce was due to expire in April 1621, and she was determined to stay until she had achieved the security of the Low Countries. In the early stages of the German war the Spanish Council of State had many reservations over giving continued assistance to the emperor. The money was badly needed in the Low Countries, and there seemed little point in promoting the ambitions of the emperor's ally, Maximilian of Bavaria. But in the ultimate analysis it was appreciated that Spain had too few allies in Europe to allow the destruction of the Austrian Habsburgs, and that she had a particular interest as well as a dynastic obligation in sustaining the imperial cause. From 1618 to 1640, therefore, in a period of appalling financial difficulties, Spain assigned substantial funds to the war in Germany.[23]

The basic reason for Spain's commitment in Germany was to be found in the Low Countries. If the imperial cause, and Catholicism, receded in Germany, the Spanish Netherlands would be correspondingly more isolated and vulnerable. Spain wanted the political frontier of the Habsburgs and the religious frontier of Catholicism maintained beyond the Low Countries. Here the moment of decision was approaching, one of the first big decisions Olivares had to make. The advice from Brussels was virtually unanimous: the Truce of Antwerp should be renewed, for with existing resources there was no possibility of winning a war. This was the policy of the Archduke Albert and after his death in July 1621 it was continued by his widow Isabella

[22] On the Valtelline and Spanish lines of communication see Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road*, pp. 69–77.

[23] There is no full-scale study of Spain and the Thirty Years War, but Spanish relations with the Austrian Habsburgs and Germany are well discussed in Bohdan Chudoba, *Spain and the Empire* 1519–1643 (Chicago, 1952), pp. 229–61. Spanish policy in the 1620's is studied by R. Ródenas Vilar, *La política europea de España durante la guerra de Treinta años*, 1624–30 (Madrid, 1967).

and her military expert, Spinola. They were overruled by Olivares and his advisers in Madrid, and their decision is usually regarded as a mistake. The renewal of the Dutch war, it is true, was a crippling blow to the Spanish economy. But the decision to renew it was not Spain's alone. The United Provinces too had a war party, led by Prince Maurice and including Calvinist extremists and Amsterdam merchants. The latter looked for profits in maritime war against the Iberian colonies. They had not wasted their time during the years of truce. The Dutch offensive against Portuguese positions in the tropics continued unabated, and if they were less successful against the Spanish empire this was due not to Dutch inhibitions but to Spanish defences. Now, with the prospect of official war, there would be even greater scope for action in the East and West Indies.[24] The renewal of the war in the Netherlands in 1621 was not a foregone conclusion. Spanish statesmen debated all the options of extending, renewing, or ending the truce, and even of converting it to permanent peace. They received no encouraging signals from the Dutch, who obtained and hoped to continue obtaining economic and financial benefits from Spain and the Indies whether war prevailed or not, but particularly if war prevailed. The Dutch colonial offensive justifiably bore great weight in Spain's decision to renew the war. In 1588 Philip II had dispatched his Armada against England in order to strike at the source of the greatest attack on his overseas empire. Similarly, in 1621, Spain resumed the struggle with the Dutch in order, in part, to remove the most serious contemporary threat to the Iberian empires. The motives in each case are intelligible, the means adopted less so. Experience had shown that land warfare against the Dutch was expensive and unproductive. The millions of ducats poured into the Low Countries might have been more profitably invested in maritime and imperial defence where, in the case of the Spanish empire at least, the Dutch had shown that they were not invincible. The Portuguese empire was the more vulnerable of the two. With the expiration of the truce of Antwerp plans for the establishment of the Dutch West India Company were immediately implemented, and in the course of 1623 an expeditionary force was mobilised for an attack on Brazil. Spanish intelligence kept Portugal fully informed of Dutch preparations and destination, but it was difficult to defend the vast Brazilian coastline—one of the deterrents to heavy investment in imperial defence—and in May 1624 the Dutch force captured Bahia and took a large booty in sugar and other products.[25]

[24] On the Dutch colonial offensive see C. R. Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire* 1600–1800 (London, 1965), pp. 25–27. On the options available to Spain see Peter Brightwell, 'The Spanish System and the Twelve Years' Truce', *English Historical Review*, 89, 350 (1974), 270–92.

[25] C. R. Boxer, *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola*, pp. 41–52.

With a foothold in Brazil the Dutch were now a greater menace to Spanish America.

While America entered into Spain's calculations in Europe, America also contributed to Spain's war effort there. Spain entered the Thirty Years War and renewed the conflict with the Dutch under favourable conditions in at least one sector of her economy, the Atlantic sector. The years 1616–20 were a kind of Indian summer in the Indies trade, with private treasure receipts shooting up from 17·8 million pesos in the previous five-year period to 25·7 million.[26] The crown's receipts dropped, it is true, from 7·2 to 4·3 million pesos, but the crown benefited indirectly from the boost given to the private sector and directly from its sequestrations of private treasure. In the period 1621–25 the crown's receipts were maintained at the previous level, while private returns dropped by about 3·5 million, but in general the favourable trading cycle was sustained, with marked results for the Spanish war effort. In December 1621 the Tierra Firme fleet was shipwrecked with much loss of treasure, and in the following year the New Spain fleet also suffered losses. Income from America, therefore, was poor in the years 1622–23, and military operations in the Low Countries were unspectacular. But in October 1624 both fleets reached Spain safely with one of the largest bullion deliveries in the history of the Indies trade.[27] There was nothing wrong with the Spanish army in the Low Countries that money could not repair. Now, with money available, Spinola led it to a spectacular success in May 1625 when he captured Breda after a ten-month siege. Perhaps even more interesting evidence of Spanish revival was the construction and equipment of a naval squadron based on Ostend and Dunkirk to wage maritime war on Dutch trade and shipping, though in the event it had to be employed primarily in a defensive role in protecting Spanish convoys through the Atlantic and the English Channel.[28]

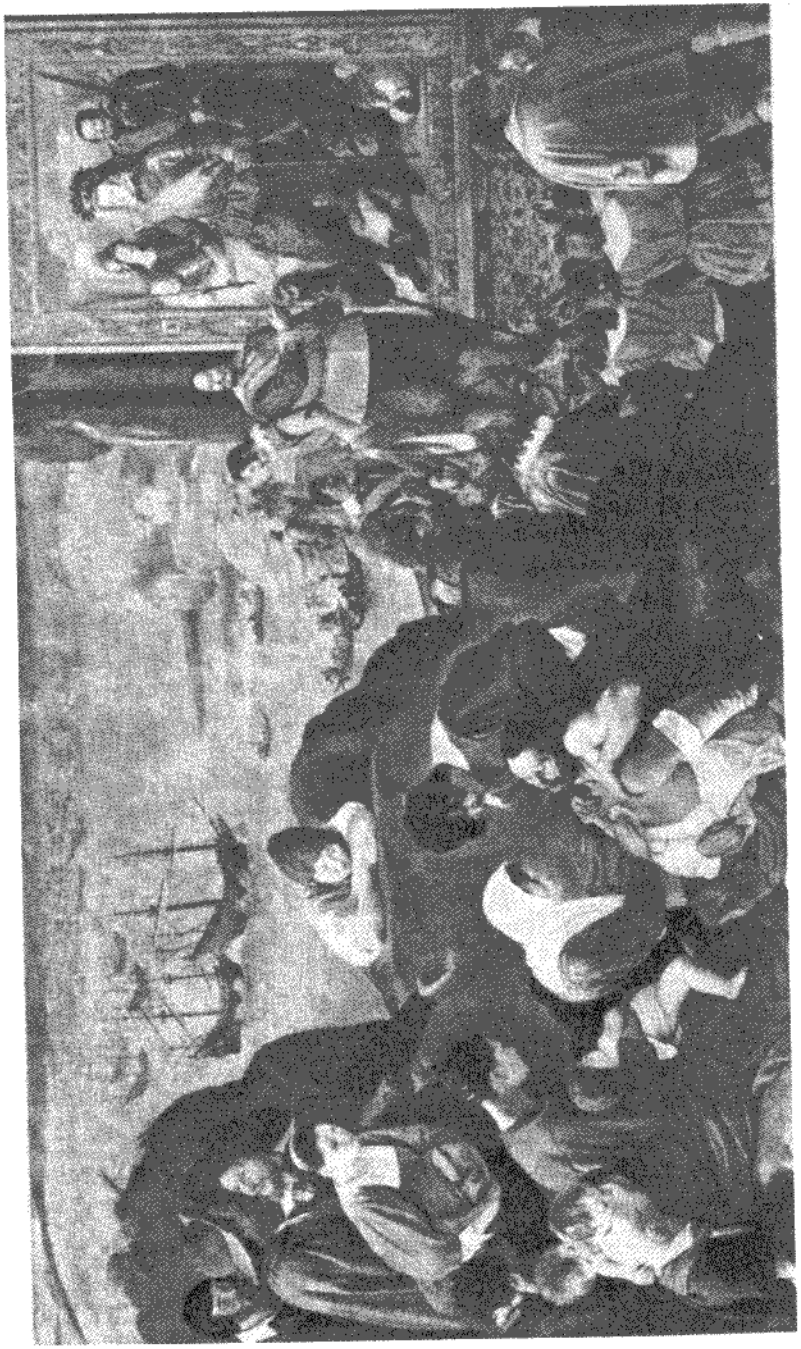
In the Americas the Spanish war effort was equally robust. Madrid reacted promptly to the capture of Bahia, if only because it was believed, as the Council of Portugal informed Philip IV, that the ultimate objective of the Dutch was 'not so much to make themselves masters of the sugar of Brazil as of the silver of Peru'.[29] This coincidence of interests produced a remarkable example of Luso-Spanish co-operation. A joint expeditionary force consisting

[26] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 34–35; Chaunu, 'Séville et la "Belgique" (1555–1648)', *op. cit.*, pp. 277, 291.

[27] A. Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, xiii (1956), 311–83, particularly pp. 338–39.

[28] Lefèvre, *Spinola et la Belgique*, 1601–1627, pp. 82–83.

[29] Quoted in Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, p. 55; see *ibid.*, pp. 56–66 for the recapture of Bahia, and the same author's *The Dutch in Brazil*, 1624–1654, p. 28.



Reconquest of Bahia by Juan Bautista Mayno

of 52 vessels, carrying 12,566 men and 1,185 guns, was assembled under the command of Don Fadrique de Toledo; it quickly struck at Bahia and after a month's siege forced the Dutch garrison to surrender on 1 May 1625. The Spanish contingent followed up this success by pursuing the enemy in the Caribbean, and there too the Dutch were repulsed, notably at Puerto Rico. The Dutch, of course, had not yet shot their bolt. During the years 1626–27 the squadron under Piet Heyn wrought considerable damage on Portuguese shipping in the South Atlantic. But for the moment Spanish naval defences were equal to the threat and the silver fleets continued to get through. And this in spite of the fact that Spain was now at war with two naval powers.

Since 1604, and more particularly since 1618, peace with England had been one of the key objectives of Spanish foreign policy. On it was thought to depend the security of the Low Countries and Spain's freedom to intervene in Germany. During the crucial early years of the Thirty Years War Spain had neutralised England by means of the Anglo-Spanish marriage negotiations, under cover of which Spinola had struck into Germany and taken the patrimony of the Elector Palatine, son-in-law of James I of England.[30] In 1624, when the marriage negotiations had collapsed in ruins and the English were convinced of Spanish bad faith, English neutrality was even more important to Spain because of the latter's expanding commitments in the Low Countries, Germany and northern Italy. Olivares shied away from the impending war; indeed it was not until an English fleet appeared at Cadiz in the autumn of 1625 that the Spanish government reconciled itself to war with England. Once war was joined, however, Olivares and his collaborators indulged in an orgy of planning and for several months they seriously discussed a project for an invasion of England on a scale even greater than that contemplated by Philip II. But while the Spaniards discussed incongruities the English practised them. At Cadiz, with a force of 90 vessels and 9,000 men, they committed every conceivable mistake. The Spanish Indies fleet was allowed to take evasive action; the attack on the town was badly conducted and was repulsed by local levies; and the whole operation ended in calamity, with loss of 1,000 men and 30 vessels. This war was not entirely of Spain's seeking. Charles I began it in 1625 because negotiations with Spain had failed to secure the restoration of the Elector Palatine's patrimony. While Philip IV had promised to use his influence with the emperor to further the cause of the elector, he had understandably refused to accept the English demand that he should undertake the restoration of the entire Palatinate by force of arms if necessary.

[30] Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (London, 1955), pp. 255–68; Carter, *The Secret Diplomacy of the Habsburgs, 1598–1625*, pp. 120–33.

With France, too, Spain sought peace but was disposed for war. And here, too, the problem was one of preserving communications with the Low Countries, particularly through the Valtelline pass, a route which France and Spain's enemies in northern Italy were equally anxious to compromise. In January 1625 the French occupied the Valtelline and made an alliance with Venice and Savoy against Genoa, Spain's traditional ally. At the same time French naval forces blockaded Genoa and threatened to cut the vital supply lines between Barcelona, Milan and the Low Countries. Without a formal declaration of war, France and Spain confronted each other. In Spain French property was sequestered, while France prohibited trade with Spain. The Spanish government intrigued with the Huguenots while the French helped the Swiss Protestants. More to the point, a squadron under the marquis of Santa Cruz raised the blockade of Genoa, and troops led by the duke of Feria forced the French to retire across the Alps. These successes, combined with political instability within France, gave Spain the edge and enabled her to emerge unscathed. By the Treaty of Monzón (March 1626) peace was restored to Italy and the status quo to the Valtelline. Spain could continue to use the pass for military purposes.

The years 1624–26 were triumphant years for Philip IV and Olivares. Overseas Spain's naval and imperial defences had withstood and repulsed Dutch probings. In Europe Spain's military prowess had again been vindicated, moving Velázquez to celebrate it in his famous *Las Lanzas* depicting the capture of Breda. In a message to the Council of Castile on the state of the nation Philip IV alluded to the harsh economic consequences for Castile of this massive war effort, but he could not restrain his jubilation at the renewal of Spanish military power:

> Our prestige has been immensely improved. We have had all Europe against us, but we have not been defeated, nor have our allies lost, whilst our enemies have sued me for peace. Last year, 1625, we had nearly 300,000 infantry and cavalry in our pay, and over 500,000 men of the militia under arms, whilst the fortresses of Spain are being put into a thorough state of defence. The fleet, which consisted of only seven vessels on my accession, rose at one time in 1625 to 108 ships of war at sea, without counting the vessels at Flanders, and the crews are the most skilful mariners this realm ever possessed. . . . This very year of 1626 we have had two royal armies in Flanders and one in the Palatinate, and yet all the power of France, England, Sweden, Venice, Savoy, Denmark, Holland, Brandenberg, Saxony, and Weimer could not save Breda from our victorious arms.[31]

[31] Quoted in Hume, *op. cit.*, pp. 156–57.

Yet the following years were an anti-climax and the big push forward in the Low Countries did not materialise. The reason was shortage of money, particularly from the Indies, that bonus on which Spanish foreign policy was so dependent. There was a close correlation in the period 1626–28 between mediocre returns from the Indies—total treasure receipts in the quinquennium 1626–30 showed a drop of more than 2 million pesos on the previous period—and the pause in the Spanish war effort.[32] In 1626 the Tierra Firme fleet brought 1·5 million ducats, which were immediately swallowed up in debts and current expenditure. In 1627, the year in which the crown was forced into a declaration of bankruptcy, American revenue yielded only 1 million ducats. But the greatest catastrophe was still to come. In 1628 Piet Heyn's Atlantic squadron captured the entire New Spain silver fleet in the Cuban harbour of Matanzas, and the Spaniards offered virtually no resistance. This was the biggest blow to Spain's pride and purse since the discovery of America, and for the Dutch a windfall from which they financed another invasion of Brazil two years later. Piet Heyn owed his triumph to a combination of good luck and good seamanship. But the incident was out of character with current Spanish naval performance on the Indies run, and this accounts in some degree for the exasperation it caused in Spain. The commander of the fleet, Admiral Juan de Benavides, was brought to trial for gross dereliction of duty; and after five years' litigation he was publicly executed in Cadiz.[33] Philip IV subsequently remarked: 'Whenever I speak of the disaster the blood runs cold in my veins, not for the loss of treasure but because we lost our reputation in that infamous defeat, caused as it was by fear and cowardice'.[34] But the loss to his treasury was grievous enough—1 million ducats, and three times that amount if the galleons and artillery are included; and for private individuals the losses totalled about 6 million ducats. It happened, moreover, at a very inopportune moment.

Thwarted by the need to fight the Dutch and the English simultaneously, on resources inadequate to the task, Spain turned to her allies in Germany. From as early as 1624 Olivares had been thinking in terms of a Habsburg league, whereby Spain would unite with the emperor and the Catholic princes for the destruction of their respective enemies in Germany and the Low Countries.[35] As Spain had not hesitated to assist the emperor in his

[32] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 34–35; Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *op. cit.*, pp. 340–41.

[33] A. Domínguez Ortiz, 'El suplicio del almirante Benavides', *Archivo Hispalense*, xxiv (1956) 159–71.

[34] Quoted in Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *op. cit.*, p. 341.

[35] Michael Roberts, *Gustavus Adolphus. A History of Sweden*, 1611–1632 (2 vols., London, 1953–58), ii, 315–16.

moment of need, it was thought reasonable that the Germans should reciprocate by lending their assistance against the Dutch. The idea was revived in 1626 but it made little headway in Germany.[36] While the emperor and Maximilian of Bavaria were anxious for Spanish aid in Germany, especially since Danish intervention there in 1626, they were not prepared to dissipate their resources on the Spanish war in the Low Countries. A concomitant of Olivares's proposed league was a plan for a Habsburg naval and merchant base in the Baltic. The Baltic was of interest to Spain, as it was to the rest of western Europe, as a source of grain, timber and naval stores, and because it was a virtual monopoly of the Dutch shippers. In the course of 1626–28 Olivares pressed the idea of a Habsburg-Hanseatic trading company to be based on ports in East Friesland. While this would challenge Dutch control of the Baltic trade, a Habsburg-Hanseatic fleet would strike at Dutch shipping and attack the enemies of the Iberian overseas empires near their homeland.[37] A further idea was to encourage Poland to take the war into Sweden and to contribute to the allied naval power. The weakness of the plan, which in many respects was a tempting and viable project, lay in the fact that none of the component parts was equal to the task; Spain's maritime protégés lacked confidence, its continental allies refused to move, and its own Dunkirk squadron was already underfinanced and overcommitted in the English Channel and the North Sea. An indispensable preliminary to a commercial and maritime league was Habsburg possession of a Baltic port. For this Olivares depended on the emperor, and the emperor's refusal to pledge himself not to lay down his arms until such a port was obtained virtually killed the scheme; the death blows were added by Hanse and Bavarian hostility. Thus the 'Baltic operation' came to an end in 1628–29, with each of the allies waiting for the others to do a little more, the emperor and the Poles for Spain to commit more naval forces and funds to the Baltic, the Spaniards for the allies to supply greater military action and support. While the Habsburgs dithered, their enemies continued to dominate the Baltic by sea, and it was as much as Spain could do to preserve vital trade routes and keep the peninsula open to vessels from the north. One of the consequences of Olivares's project was that it alarmed Gustavus Adolphus and reinforced his motives for taking Sweden into the Thirty Years War.[38]

[36] Philip IV to Archduchess Isabella, 9 September 1626, 4 July 1628, in Henri Lonchay, Joseph Cuvelier, and Joseph Lefèvre, eds., *Correspondance de la Cour d'Espagne sur les affaires des Pays-Bas au XVII^e siècle* (6 vols., Brussels, 1923–37), ii, 899, 1242.

[37] The history of this policy has been clarified by José Alcalá-Zamora y Queipo de Llano, *España, Flandes y el Mar del Norte* (1618–1639) (Barcelona, 1975), pp. 229–30, 236–42, 267–76; see also Rafael Ródenas Vilar, 'Un gran proyecto anti-holandés en tiempo de Felipe IV. La destrucción del comercio rebelde en Europa', *Hispania*, xxii (1962), 542–58.

[38] Roberts, *op. cit.*, ii, 317–18.

The frustrations he encountered in northern Europe caused Olivares to seek more fruitful terrain for the Spanish war effort. His eyes fell on northern Italy, where in December 1627 the duke of Mantua died leaving a succession problem. The most convincing claimant to the duchy was the French duke of Nevers, but Olivares feared that the succession of a French client would endanger Spain's interests in northern Italy and threaten her strategic communications. In March 1628, therefore, he ordered the governor of Milan, Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, to occupy Montferrat, a key position in the Mantuan estates situated on Milan's western frontier.[39] But what Olivares had conceived as a quick and decisive operation degenerated into a costly and bloody war. A French army predictably crossed the Alps and soon Spain was fighting to save Milan. The great Spinola was sent to command the Spanish and imperial forces, but when he died (25 September 1630) victory was no nearer and the Spaniards were thankful to accept an armistice, a prelude to the peace of Cherasco (April 1631) which ended the sterile conflict. Spain gained nothing from the War of Mantua, and her responsibility for it was a departure from the doctrine of defence on which her foreign policy was professedly based. On both counts her prestige suffered. So did her resources: by this miscalculation Olivares sabotaged any hopes his administration may have entertained of financial recovery. The Italian front swallowed up all the crown's returns from the Indies and a good portion of private returns. Of the 3 million ducats of private revenue brought on the Tierre Firme fleet in 1629 the crown laid its hands on 1 million and added it to its own 800,000 for immediate dispatch to Italy. In 1630 the crown received about 1·8 million ducats from the two fleets, a healthy sum for the time, which together with a 'loan' of half a million from Seville merchants also disappeared in defence costs.[40] In 1631 about 5 million ducats of American treasure went to the bottom of the sea through shipwreck. The Italian war had been no less wasteful.

The War of Mantua was a distraction from, not a contribution towards, the central issue of Spanish policy, the war against the Dutch. Coinciding as it did with the financial stringency caused by the loss of the New Spain fleet in 1628, it brought the campaign in the Low Countries virtually to a halt. This intractable problem was extensively debated in the Council of State in the course of 1628, as the Spanish government doggedly sought the way to success. Spinola—temporarily recalled to Madrid—outlined two possible policies, either a firm renewal of a lengthy truce with the Dutch, or the dispatch of sufficient funds to permit a determined offensive. He himself favoured

[39] See Manuel Fernández Alvarez, *Don Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba y la Guerra de Sucesión de Mantua y del Monferrato* (1627–1629) (Madrid, 1955).

[40] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *op. cit.*, pp. 342–49.

a truce, on the ground that the past sixty years had shown the impossibility of reducing the Dutch by force. The reply of Olivares was astonishingly unrealistic even for him. He demanded an energetic renewal of hostilities, without the slightest indication of how they were to be paid for; the object should be not a truce but a definitive peace treaty which would make the United Provinces a vassal state of Spain, forcing them to recognise explicitly the sovereignty of the king of Spain and to undertake to break off all alliances with Spain's enemies; they must accept a Spanish delegate in all their councils, promulgate their laws in the name of Philip IV, and perform a yearly act of deference to him.[41] Yet Olivares's policy, with all its delusions, was in substance the policy which Spain continued to follow. Not surprisingly Spinola declined to implement it and refused to return to his post. In 1629 the Spaniards lost Bois-le-Duc in Brabant, and in the following year the Dutch, switching their attack back to Brazil, began the conquest of Pernambuco.

What options were left to Spain? American revenue provided few windfalls in these years. Throughout the 1630's the crown's treasure receipts did not rise above the current yearly average of 1 million pesos; and returns to the private sector, on which the Spanish economy depended, dropped from 20·3 million pesos in 1626–30, to 12·3 million in 1631–35, to 11·6 million in 1636–40.[42] Peace was made with England in 1630 and with France in 1631. But Sweden's powerful descent upon Germany worsened the prospects of the Habsburgs, and Spain had no confidence in the peace with France. Hitherto France had confined herself to giving subsidies to the enemies of the Habsburgs, but in the early 1630's she seemed to be making more warlike preparations. From 1632 to 1635 Spanish policy was indecisive, fearful of sudden attack but uncertain whether to strike first. The Councils of War and of State constantly returned to the problem, and they began to make plans for an *exército real*, an army led by the king himself with all the nobility and their retainers. It was never clarified whether the role of this army would be defensive or whether it would strike beyond the Pyrenees; and the whole idea made little sense except in so far as it was a pretext for getting money in lieu of service out of the Spanish nobility. Meanwhile the Rhine fortresses fell into the hands of the Protestants, Spain had to send reinforcements to Germany and the Low Countries, and the latter were now threatened in the rear by France. As one front after another deteriorated, Olivares turned once more to Germany.

Spain still possessed one card in Germany, the Lower Palatinate, which was now regarded as an essential part of her strategic communications. As

[41] Lefèvre, *Spinola et la Belgique*, pp. 92–100; on Spinola, see also A. Rodríguez Villa, *Ambrosio Spinola, primer marqués de los Balbases* (Madrid, 1905).

[42] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 34–35.

Philip IV remarked in 1638, 'the Palatinate is the best guarantee of our continued possession of the Low Countries and Italy'.[43] And in spite of German pressure Spain was determined to keep it until her possessions in northern Europe were secure. It was the only compensation she had ever received from the Empire for her military and financial aid, and it was a useful bargaining counter in her periodic attempts to interest her German allies in the problems of the Low Countries. From 1630 to 1648 Spain had strong diplomatic representation in Germany, including the count of Oñate, the architect of Habsburg collaboration in 1618, and Diego Saavedra y Fajardo, a theoretician of government as well as a distinguished diplomat.[44] Their object was to persuade the emperor and the Catholic princes that the survival of Habsburg rule in the Low Countries was as important to Germany as to Spain. Their arguments were reinforced by subsidies to the Catholic electors, who were expected to counter the influence of the duke of Bavaria. The latter's opposition to German intervention in the Low Countries and his neutralism with regard to France made him a great security risk in Spanish eyes, and it was Saavedra's task to watch him, to contain his influence, and to get him positively committed to the Habsburg cause, especially in the Low Countries. It was recognised by Spanish planners that subsidies and diplomacy were not sufficient in themselves to procure active German co-operation in the war against the Dutch or in any war against France. Spain would have to convince by her example, to contribute a powerful military contingent to a joint Habsburg force which would serve at once imperial interests in Germany and Spanish interests in the Low Countries. The need was all the more pressing because of two recent developments: at the end of 1631 the armies of Gustavus Adolphus and his German allies occupied the Lower Palatinate, and a few months later Richelieu acquired some strategic positions in Lorraine. Communications between Italy and the Low Countries were threatened anew.

Attacked by Sweden and threatened by France, the Habsburg cause required renewed collaboration between Vienna and Madrid. In February 1632 they signed a treaty of mutual help, and Olivares stirred himself to implement it.[45] Overwhelming problems of war and finance had momentarily reduced Olivares to a state of acute melancholia, and he seemed to despair of the future of Spain.[46] But his planning on this occasion was sound enough. In the course of 1633–34 a powerful army was assembled under the command of the Cardinal Infante Ferdinand, younger brother of Philip IV,

[43] Philip IV to the Cardinal Infante, 5 November 1638, Lonchay, *Correspondance*, iii, 807.

[44] See Manuel Fraga Iribarne, *Don Diego de Saavedra y Fajardo y la diplomacia de su época* (Madrid, 1956).

[45] On plans for Habsburg military collaboration see Chudoba, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

[46] Marañón, *op. cit.*, pp. 80–82.

a man who wore his sword more frequently than his cardinal's hat.[47] Moving north across the Alps from Milan he was joined by imperial forces under general Gallas and inflicted a crushing defeat on the Swedes at Nördlingen in September 1634. This campaign, one of the most spectacular of the war, brought a halt to Swedish successes, cleared southern Germany for the Habsburgs, and gave renewed confidence to the emperor and his allies. But it brought imperial armies no closer to the Low Countries. Count Oñate finally got the emperor's signature to an offensive and defensive treaty against the Dutch in October 1634. His active participation in the war was more difficult to procure. When France intervened in 1635 and thus opened a new front in the Low Countries, Spanish appeals for imperial and German assistance became more insistent.[48] But apart from a token and temporary imperial contingent Spain received no German aid in the Low Countries.

Far from inaugurating an anti-Dutch Habsburg league, the victory of Nördlingen only worsened Spanish prospects. For it increased France's aversion to Habsburg power and reinforced her determination to enter the war, which she did in May 1635. This not only opened up new fronts for Spain but placed in jeopardy all the lines of communications with northern and central Europe which she had so laboriously built up over the years. And while France entered the war relatively fresh, Spain had been fighting for over fifteen years. The search for untapped resources now seemed hopeless. The Spanish economy was in a state of depression, its last prop, the Indies trade, suffering progressive contraction.[49] Between 1629 and 1631 occurred a decisive fall in the volume of the transatlantic trade and from then onwards it never permanently recovered. This was reflected in the mediocre silver returns of the 1630's which never came near to covering the deficits from defence expenditure.[50] The government was only too aware of this, and so was the Castilian taxpayer.

3. The Cost of War

In financial matters Philip IV was served by the most professional of all his councils, the Council of Finance. Established in 1523, reorganised in 1593, and reformed in 1621, it now consisted of a president, six councillors, a fiscal and

[47] See A. Van der Essen, *Le Cardinal-Infant et la politique européenne de l'Espagne* (1609–1634). Vol. I (Brussels, 1944), and 'Le rôle du Cardinal-Infant dans la politique espagnole du XVII[e] siècle', *Revista de la Universidad de Madrid*, iii (1954), 357–83.

[48] Cardinal Infante to Castañeda, 24 August 1637, Lonchay, *Correspondance*, vi, 399.

[49] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1643–83.

[50] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *op. cit.*, pp. 350–52.

a secretary.[51] The president tended to be a professional administrator rather than a member of the higher nobility, and the councillors were a mixture of bureaucrats, minor nobility and bankers. Its basic function was to administer the royal revenue, either farming it out on lease or keeping it under government administration. From the product it paid the *juristas* (owners of state bonds), and provided guarantees to the bankers for their *asientos* (contracts for the actual defraying of expenditure at home and abroad). The Council of Finance employed very few of its own officials in the collection of revenue.[52] *Sisas* (excise) and subsidies granted by the cortes were collected by local authorities; the *alcabala* was a composition tax paid by the localities; customs duties and taxes on wool, tobacco and such-like were usually on lease, with the lessees employing their own personnel and paying the product direct to the owners of *juros* charged on the revenue in question. Although administrative costs were apparently slight, in fact the system was expensive to the treasury and oppressive to the taxpayer. The lessees, often Portuguese Jews, pressed hard on the taxpayers in order to make a profit, and they not infrequently siphoned off the funds and declared themselves bankrupt. Municipal administration of taxes was often fraudulent, to the profit of those with places or creatures in the municipalities, powerful people who did not themselves pay but used the money of those who did for their own financial advantage. Fraud and evasion became more common as the state's demands became more pressing and its administration less efficient, as it did towards the end of Philip IV's reign. Excesses of this kind made Spanish taxation, which was not in itself immoderate, a highly discriminatory instrument and one regarded by those who suffered from it as an intolerable abuse.[53] But this was not the only trouble.

In the course of Philip IV's reign many new taxes were introduced. According to a report made to the cortes in 1623, Castile contributed more than 9 million ducats annually, of which 5½ million were assigned to the payment of *juros*; this did not include revenue from America which, as has been seen, was now falling steeply. At the beginning of the following reign the Council of Finance reported (1667) an income of 12·7 million ducats, of which 9·1 million were already alienated; but this statement did not include revenues administered by other bodies, the profits from debasement of coinage, or income from benevolences and sale of office; counting these, annual income probably then reached an average of 20 million ducats. These figures reflect the new taxes created during the reign of Philip IV. Some of them were more

[51] See Ramón Carande, *Carlos V y sus banqueros. La Hacienda Real de Castilla* (Madrid, 1949), chapter 2; Cristóbal Espejo, *El Consejo de Hacienda durante la Presidencia del marqués de Poza* (Madrid, 1924); Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 171–76.

[52] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 176–80.

[53] For an attempt to estimate the level of taxation see *ibid.*, pp. 180–85.

harmful in their consequential effects than the amount they yielded justified; devices such as coinage debasement, sale of office, and sale of common lands were extremely damaging to different sectors of public and private life. But the greatest cause for complaint was that this taxation was only part of the burden which the taxpayer had to carry. For it covered only part of the expenditure of the public sector—the royal household, diplomacy, administration, and above all defence, which together with the public debt represented by the *juros* absorbed the greater part of taxation. There still remained many services—public works, social welfare, education, medical facilities—which today the state assumes but which in seventeenth-century Spain were a charge on private or local enterprise and financed from various sources, such as tithes, municipal taxes, pious foundations. The tithes alone represented taxation comparable in volume to all the regular revenues of the Castilian treasury put together, and it weighed exclusively on farmers and peasants, most of whom were already subject to payment of rents and seigneurial dues. Public taxation, therefore, while not in itself excessive, fell on a sector of the population already burdened with other payments. Little wonder that it produced depopulation of entire villages.

Financial reform was a favourite theme in the early years of the new regime. It was canvassed principally by Olivares and coincided conveniently, some thought, with his desire to punish his opponents of the previous reign. The duke of Osuna, former viceroy of Sicily and Naples, was put on trial for peculation; the aged Lerma and his son Uceda were also brought to account and forced to disgorge some of their takings. But Olivares's attack on corruption went beyond vindictiveness: his reforms represented a determined attempt to impose financial restraint on the administration and the public alike. He had to begin with the king, who regarded the treasury as his privy purse and, to the exasperation of his officials, gave from it lavishly to an endless line of impecunious nobles, orphans, widows, ex-officers and other suitors who thronged the court, some deserving, many less so. Olivares insisted on restraint in the granting of *mercedes*, and as long as he held influence they were in fact severely rationed and many previously granted were pruned; it was only in the last decades of the reign that the weak and irresponsible monarch shed the restrictions imposed by his former minister and lavished grants on begging suitors from a treasury which could not afford them. The royal household was another problem. In the reigns of Charles V and Philip II its maintenance had cost the taxpayers of Castile about 1 million ducats a year, about 10 per cent. of the budget; under Philip III this had grown to 1,300,000 ducats, and the cortes were agitating for its reduction.[54] Under the prompting of Olivares, Philip IV began to reduce his household

[54] *Ibid.*, pp. 168–71.

expenses, reducing the numbers of courtiers and officials, cutting their salaries, stopping the extravagant perquisites to which they had been entitled, and generally saving money. The 'reduced' household was still enormous, but a start had been made and an example set. Two years after these measures, in 1626, the king wrote: 'I have twice reformed my household, and although my servants may be more numerous than before, I have had no other money to pay them with than honours, and they have received no pecuniary pay. As for my personal expenses, the moderation of my dress and my rare feasts prove how modest it is, and I spend no money voluntarily on myself, for I try to give my vassals an example to avoid vain ostentation'.[55] There was a measure of self-delusion in these claims, but if the financial records are to be believed Philip IV did manage to restore the level of royal household expenditure to that of the sixteenth century.[56]

Olivares also attempted to reform the administration, partly by reducing the conciliar and municipal bureaucracy, partly by imposing new standards of integrity. In 1622 he set up a *junta de la reformación de costumbres* to prevent peculation among office-holders. The junta was to register the property of all senior officials appointed since 1592 and to compare it with the total of their possessions before their term of office began. It was further decreed (16 January 1622) that in future all senior appointees before taking office should make a sworn inventory of their private property and repeat the process at each promotion. These measures were extremely unpopular and in view of the resistance they met it is unlikely that they were permanently enforced. Olivares finally tried to impose restraint on private spending. In the 1620's he caused to be enacted a series of sumptuary laws so extensive in their application—they embraced an incongruous range of items from clothes to coaches and from bullion to brothels—as to be quite unenforceable.[57] And like all sumptuary laws they attacked only symptoms. In any case, all Philip IV's protestations of good faith and all Olivares's reforms suffered from a basic weakness: they regarded financial reform not as a function of the internal needs of Spain but as a means to practise foreign policy, a policy which was far more costly than that of any other reign and brought very few returns.

In July 1621, soon after the revival of hostilities in the Low Countries, the Council of Finance informed the king that he was beginning his reign with an empty treasury; much of his revenue was anticipated up to 1625, and 'resources are so exhausted that we do not know where to turn'.[58] The bankers, too, were aware of the facts and they advanced not the 1½ million

[55] Quoted in Hume, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
[56] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, p. 179.
[57] Hume, *op. cit.*, pp. 131–32, 137–40.
[58] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 12–13.

ducats requested but a mere 600,000, secured on various extraordinary revenues. The Low Countries, however, were soon absorbing annually not 1½ million ducats as in the last years of the truce but 3½ million, while naval defence in the Atlantic, a prerequisite in any war with the Dutch, more than doubled its cost to 1 million ducats. In spite of a reduction in court expenditure, therefore, the first budget of the reign produced an expenditure of 8·2 million ducats, almost double that of the last budget of Philip III. As available revenue up to 1625 only reached 5·8 million ducats, there remained an enormous deficit. Philip IV and Olivares were not impressed by these difficulties: they regarded them as a legacy for which they were not responsible; and nothing could shake their conviction that political problems took precedence over pecuniary ones, which were never insuperable. In the early years of the reign, to 1626, they simply adopted expedients which had been well tried in the past. First, they anticipated revenue. When this proved insufficient they continued the coinage of vellon initiated by Philip III, but on an even more massive scale. On 24 June 1621 the king decreed the coining of 4 million ducats, arguing that 'my chief obligation is to preserve and defend the kingdom against my enemies, and this does not admit delay'.[59] The decision was taken without reference to the cortes and it broke one of the conditions attached to previous subsidies. As a financial device it was extremely clumsy: copper was expensive to import and to coin; profits were slow and inadequate; and the consequent monetary disorder damaged the economy. But what was the alternative? The government was still reluctant to create new taxes, and it was still thought, as in Lerma's time, that there must be some way of procuring great sums without anyone having to pay them. This was the classical period of the *arbitristas*, those contrivers of schemes, or *arbitrios*, who searched for a 'universal means' to improve the situation; many of them favoured the invention of a single tax, though there was much disagreement as to the commodity on which it should fall.

Meanwhile the government was frantically searching for money to rush to the Flanders front, remittances for which it wished to increase to 300,000 ducats a month in 1623. When the Council of Finance complained that it could not lay its hands on the money for these and other defence costs, it was rebuked by Philip IV: 'There is no need to warn me about the state of my treasury, for I am not responsible for its present situation. . . . It behoves the Council of Finance not to spend all its time pointing out difficulties but to attempt to resolve them'.[60] But the Council of Finance was not alone in its reservations about current financial policy. The bankers too were becoming restless, weary of being fobbed off with *juros* instead of hard cash, and steadily pushing up their rates of interest. For the contracts which backed the successful

[59] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 14.
[60] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 21.

war effort of 1624–26 they insisted on extremely rigorous conditions, and at the beginning of 1626 Olivares had to stay up a whole night arguing with them before they agreed to the contracts for that year. The Genoese bankers, hitherto the mainstay of royal finances, were now anxious to cut their losses and retire from the *asiento* business. But this year, for the first time, a consortium of Portuguese Jewish financiers offered Olivares a loan of 400,000 escudos for payment in the Low Countries. Their capital resources were small compared to those of the Genoese, but Olivares encouraged their initiative as a means of keeping down the interest rates and as an alternative for the future.[61]

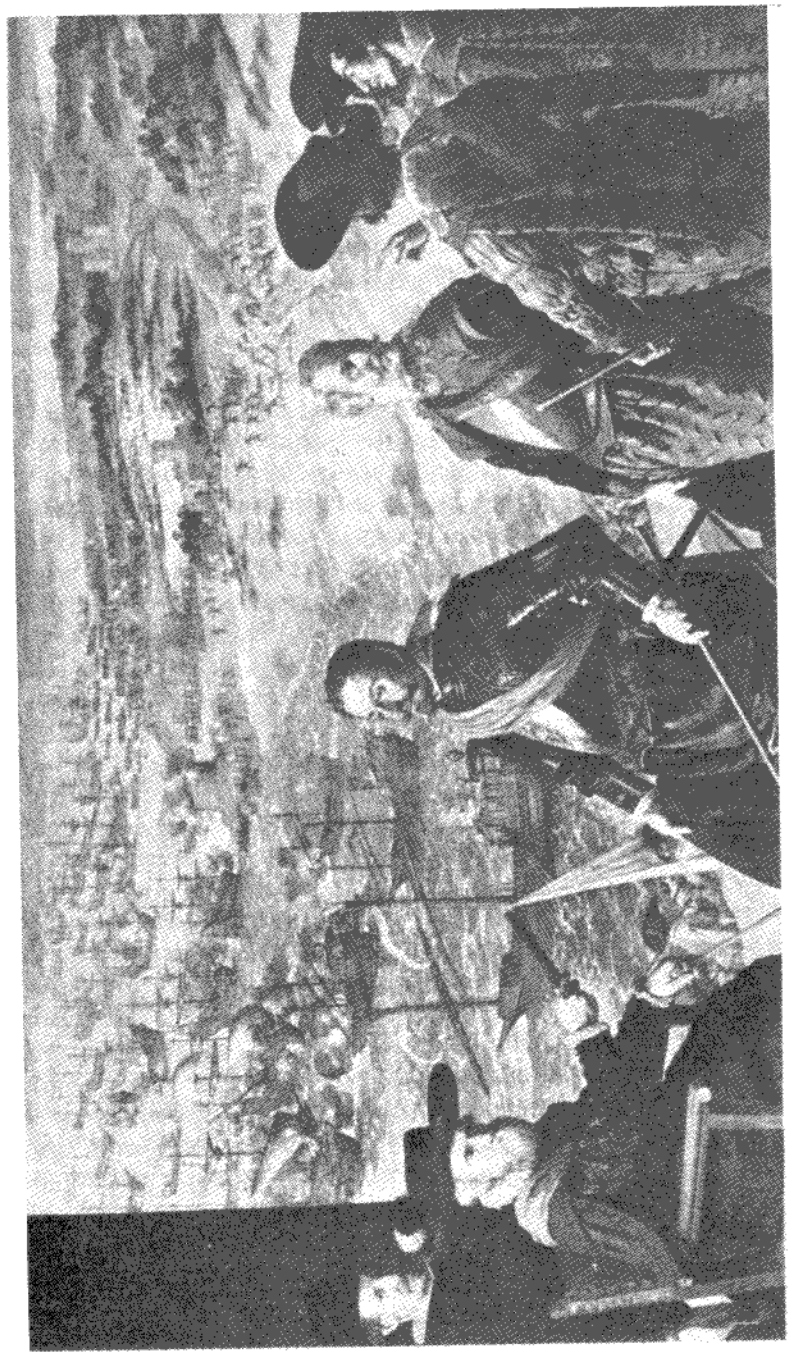
The Genoese had foreseen a crash. It came at the end of January 1627 when the crown, unable to anticipate revenue further, declared its bankruptcy, suspended its servicing of debts, and compensated its creditors with *juros*. Philip IV and Olivares were more complacent about this operation than were the bankers, regarding it simply as a conversion of short-term into long-term debts, as in a sense it was; it had become a regular device, adopted roughly every twenty years, and it was sometimes the prelude to financial restraint and reform. But it was useless to look to Philip IV and Olivares for financial reform: they regarded the treasury as an instrument for defraying defence costs. The late 1620's were bad years for Castile, with renewed inflation depressing living standards still further for its long-suffering people. Inflation was aggravated by bad harvests and by the scarcity of imported goods caused by a partial closing of the frontiers during wartime. But it had already been induced by the massive coinage of vellon from the very beginning of the reign. Between 1621 and 1626 the crown minted 19·7 million ducats of vellon, from which it made a profit of 13 million ducats. The premium on silver soared from 4 per cent. in 1620 to 50 per cent. in 1626.[62] The treasury itself was a victim of this monetary disorder. At one point in the war it had to guarantee the Fuggers 180,000 ducats in vellon to make a payment of 80,000 ducats in silver in Germany. 'How am I going to rescue my stricken kingdoms from the oppression of vellon?', cried Philip IV to the Council of Finance.[63] One answer was to stop further issues. By a decree of 8 May 1626 minting was suspended. And on 7 August 1628 the crown reduced the tariff of vellon by 50 per cent.[64] This savage deflationary measure—which the crown promised was its last word on vellon—reduced the premium on silver, though at the cost of great hardship to individual holders of vellon, who were not compensated and suffered losses totalling some 14 million ducats. But it

[61] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

[62] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 80–81, 96; Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 256, 276, n. 16.

[63] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 38.

[64] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, p. 83.



Defence of Cadiz against the English by Zurbarán

brought relief to the treasury by the reduction in the premium it had to pay the bankers for silver. And, in conjunction with the suspension of payments of the previous year, it could have been the point of departure for a new financial policy. In 1627 the Indies fleets returned with substantial remittances of precious metals. And on all fronts—England, the Low Countries and Germany—the war was dormant.

It was at this point that Olivares chose to go on the offensive and launched the aggressive and, in the event, fruitless war of Mantua, the only war which ever troubled the conscience of Philip IV. The heavy costs of the Italian war coincided (1628) with the loss of the treasure-laden New Spain fleet in the bay of Matanzas. The Tierra Firme fleet brought only 800,000 ducats for the crown, which took a forced loan of 1 million ducats from the silver which had arrived for private investors. Olivares could only complete the *asientos* for 1629 by bringing in the Portuguese financiers and persuading them to accept 15 per cent. interest in place of the current 24–30 per cent. This was accompanied by minor palliatives such as selling *hidalguías*, seigneurial jurisdiction and municipal offices, in an attempt to meet the defence costs of 1629–30. The years 1627–34, therefore, saw no financial reform, only greater financial irresponsibility as the crown searched frantically for new sources of income.[65]

As the war in northern Europe gathered momentum in 1632 Olivares turned his frightening gaze once more on the taxpayers of Spain, and they rested as usual on those of Castile.[66] The cortes, which had already been held to a particularly long session in 1623–29, were convoked again in February 1632. They were asked to vote a three-year subsidy of 9 million ducats and given ten days to decide. They were understandably reluctant, pointing to the parlous state of the country, the multitude of taxes, the pernicious effects of debasement, the forced sale of offices and *hidalguías* to towns that had to pay for them out of municipal funds for want of takers, to all of which they added their customary warnings about rural deprivation and depopulation, concluding that 'the people ought to be relieved of impositions rather than given new ones for the benefit of other kingdoms'.[67] Then the browbeating began. The king warned them that he had been advised by the Council of Finance to send home those members who did not obey. Olivares tried to impress them with a statement of expenditure totalling, with some exaggeration, more than 18 million escudos. And the usual trading in pensions and honours was not neglected. Eventually the cortes voted 2½ million ducats over six years, 416,666 ducats a year, to be raised from new taxes on sugar,

[65] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 40–49, 359–64, 388–89.
[66] He was also, of course, unsuccessfully attempting to tax Catalonia; see below, pp. 107–10.
[67] On the proceedings of this cortes see *Actas de las Cortes de Castilla*, xlix.

paper, chocolate, fish and tobacco; they also doubled the regular *millones* subsidy to 4 million ducats a year by raising the taxes on basic foodstuffs, thus further depressing the living standards of the poor.

The expedition of the Cardinal Infante Ferdinand to Germany and the Low Countries in 1634 was a major financial undertaking, and on this occasion ecclesiastical revenue came to the rescue. The costs of the campaign were met in part by the numerous ecclesiastical benefices held by Ferdinand, particularly the wealthy see of Toledo and the Portuguese abbacies of Thomar and Crato; by the sale of seigneurial jurisdiction and municipal offices; and by the sale of a portion of the future *millones* revenue to financiers. But the victory of Nördlingen, presaging as it did French intervention in the war, only produced another financial nightmare. During 1634 Olivares worked feverishly with the Council of Finance and the *junta de medios* (committee of ways and means) to find supplies for the following year. A decree of 23 September fixed the expenditure for 1635 at 7,256,000 escudos: 5,656,000 for the Low Countries, 600,000 for Germany, 500,000 for northern Italy, and the rest for Spain. This was one of the largest Habsburg defence budgets ever. Olivares and his advisers appreciated the impossibility of the bankers providing such a sum, and they decided to negotiate for 5 million escudos, trying other expedients for the balance. The king rejected the advice indignantly: 'I do not know how you have the nerve to make such a proposal, which is offensive to my Council of State and, what is worse, to me. . . . I order you to set to and complete the negotiation with the bankers by dint of work, interest and prerogative'.[68] He ordered all senior ministers to buy *juros*, and local officials were instructed to promote a similar sales campaign in their districts. Foreigners were forced to pay to the treasury half of a year's returns on the *juros* they held. And, disregarding his promise of 1628, the king ordered further debasement of the coinage in March 1636.[69] This inaugurated a new period of financial disorder. From 1635 Castile entered a period of total war and its economy was subject to unprecedented pressure by the demands of defence expenditure. The financial planners ceased to plan and simply reacted despairingly to one circumstance after another, improvising from day to day and returning ever more frequently to the defenceless taxpayers of Castile. The people looked in vain for relief to their king. And they could expect no protection from their own representatives.

4. The Cortes of Castile

One of the sternest critics of the crown's financial practices was the cortes of Castile. In 1617 the town of Zamora instructed its representatives to

[68] Quoted in Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, p. 48.
[69] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, p. 84.

resist further demands for subsidies and to seek a reduction of its tax assessment which had been set at 29,000 ducats fifteen years previously. 'The misery and poverty of this region and the great tax burden it bears are causing a daily flight of capital and labour. The countryside is exhausted, its farming and stock consumed. Trade, cattle and crops are down to a third of their previous volume'.[70] Denunciations like these were part of the stock-in-trade of the seventeenth-century cortes. But while they spoke like lions they acted like lambs.

The crown negotiated with the higher nobility and the clergy outside of the cortes, and these estates had long since ceased to attend. So the cortes in fact comprised the representatives of eighteen cities and towns of Castile—Burgos, León, Seville, Córdoba, Murcia, Jaén, Toledo, Zamora, Toro, Soria, Valladolid, Salamanca, Segovia, Madrid, Avila, Guadalajara, Cuenca and Granada. Throughout the sixteenth century representation in the cortes was confined to these towns, each of which sent two *procuradores*, or deputies. Unrepresented towns resented their exclusion, not because they wished to bring themselves to the attention of the crown, but because in the actual voting and administration of taxes those who were represented were able to favour themselves at the expense of those who were not. In the reign of Philip IV, when most things were up for sale, seats in the cortes too could be bought. In 1625 Galicia bought representation; so too, at the end of the reign, did Palencia. In 1639 Jérez sought to buy its way in, for a sum of 85,000 ducats, in order to free itself from the dominance of Seville. The cynical arguments used by the Council of Finance against the application were an interesting commentary on the role of the cortes. To admit Jérez, observed the Council, would simply give the government more trouble and expense, with one more town to manage in procuring majority votes, and two more deputies to satisfy with grants and honours; to raise 85,000 ducats the town councillors of Jérez, who alone would benefit from representation, would have to impose taxes on the mass of the citizens, who would get no benefit at all; in any case Jérez was already in arrears in its normal taxes and highly unlikely to be capable of raising the offered sum.[71] In the event the king granted the application on condition that the money came from the pockets of the twenty-four town councillors and not from taxes on the citizens. At that point the application was withdrawn.

The cortes of Castile existed not to make laws, which was an exclusive

[70] Manuel Danvila y Collado, *El poder civil en España* (6 vols., Madrid, 1885–87), vi, 67, 76–77.

[71] Consulta del Consejo de Hacienda, 21 July 1639, in Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, appendix XII, p. 372. See also the same author's 'Concesiones de votos en Cortes a ciudades castellanas en el siglo XVII', *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español*, xxx (1961), 175–86.

prerogative of the crown, but to vote taxes.[72] In taxation the crown's sovereignty was limited by the basic principle, established since the beginning of the fourteenth century, that new taxes could not be imposed without the consent of the cortes. During most of the sixteenth century ordinary sources of income—existing taxes, ecclesiastical revenue, and returns from the Indies—enabled the crown to pay its way without going frequently to the cortes for extraordinary supplies. But the rising defence expenditure of Philip III and Philip IV forced these monarchs to have frequent and lengthy recourse to the cortes in search of new taxes. Philip III convoked the cortes on six occasions, Philip IV on eight occasions, one of which was a session lasting six years (1623–29). The cortes depended for their assembly on royal summons. There was no general rule regulating the election of deputies, and practices varied from town to town, some proceeding by elections, others by rotation or lot. The Spanish monarch did not normally go in person to his cortes but was represented by a minister, who opened the session with a speech from the throne, the *Proposición*, outlining the reasons for summoning the cortes, particularly the state of the treasury and its new needs, and exhorting them to do their duty. Having studied this message, and if proceedings went smoothly, the deputies then agreed on a sum to be granted, indicating the taxes by which it was to be raised, and imposing as a condition of the grant that it be applied to the expenditure for which it was requested. And in order to ensure the conditions of appropriation the cortes administered the grant through a commission of deputies which gradually became a permanent bureaucratic body subordinate to the royal treasury.

These specific, if limited, powers, combined with the needs of the crown, gave the cortes a certain bargaining capacity which they sometimes used to effect. They were particularly critical of the monetary policy of the crown and made more than one attempt to stop debasement of the coinage. In 1608, for example, as a condition of the *millones* grant of 2½ million ducats a year for seven years, they procured a promise from the king not to coin additional vellon under any circumstances for the next twenty years.[73] But in 1617 in view of the enormous budget deficit, they released him from his promise and subsequently agreed to a vellon issue yielding 1 million ducats profit.[74] After this Philip III continued his inflationary measures without much reference to the cortes, and Philip IV issued vellon without reference to

[72] On the cortes of Castile see Manuel Colmeiro, *Introducción a las Cortes de los antiguos reinos de León y de Castilla* (2 vols., Madrid, 1888); Danvila, *El poder civil en España*, vi; and Danvila's series of articles, primarily documentation, on the cortes of Castile in the reign of Philip IV in *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, xv (1889), 385–433, 497–542, xvi (1890), 69–164, 228–90, xvii (1890), 273–321.

[73] *Actas*, xxiv, 637–39.

[74] *Actas*, xxx, 109–19, xxxi, 191–93, 196–201.

them at all, though he occasionally consulted them on some of its consequences. In April 1628 the deputies voted to have five hundred masses celebrated for the 'enlightenment of their intelligence' in studying the reform of vellon.[75] The cortes were in a stronger position when some particular financial proposal required the positive co-operation of the public. In 1623, for example, searching frantically for additional sources of income, the government advanced the idea of forming public banks, capitalised by forced loans from the public graded according to income; these banks would borrow at 3 per cent. and lend at 5 per cent. This proposal met with the utter opposition of the cortes and the towns they represented, on the grounds that the contributions would be obligatory and unequal in incidence; and the matter had to be dropped.[76]

The government of Philip IV was particularly contemptuous of the cortes, and it was possibly in reaction to this, as well as to the rising demands for supplies, that the towns of Castile attempted to put some teeth into the cortes by modifying their procedure. Traditionally, in attaching conditions to grants, the cortes had presented petitions to the crown for redress of grievances. These were notoriously ignored. In 1623, therefore, many towns gave their deputies only the power of a *voto consultivo*, or provisional vote, reserving to themselves the *voto decisivo*, that is ratification of the grant offered; and the deputies were instructed that ratification would be withheld until the crown agreed to the conditions or gave good reasons why it should not.

The new procedure was soon put to the test. In 1623, under government prodding, a commission of the cortes produced proposals for a number of new taxes; these included a 12 per cent. tax on public offices, a 'fifth' on all grants from the crown yielding the recipient an income, including *encomiendas* in the Indies, a 5 per cent. tax on luxury textiles and on *juros* and *censos*. These proposals were a rare and promising development in tax policy, for they were aimed at the haves rather than the have-nots and would have spared the labouring masses in town and country. It was precisely for this reason that the cortes chose to dig in their heels. The deputies for Seville, Juan Ramírez de Guzmán and Francisco Ruidiaz de Pineda, opposed most of the new proposals on the grounds that they would impose further burdens on an already overtaxed city, whose returns from the Indies were under constant threat of sequestration. And they declared their incapacity to vote on the proposals as their municipality had reserved to itself the *voto decisivo*.[77] The opposition of Seville, however, was not as firm as it looked for its municipality was divided into two factions, the partisans of Olivares, who

[75] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, p. 83, n. 3.
[76] *Actas*, xxxviii, xxxix, *passim*.
[77] *Actas*, xl, *passim*.

were backed by the Asistente, the crown's official in the area, and an independent faction including most of the twenty-four proprietary office-holders in the municipality; the latter were inspired by the local aristocracy led by the wealthy family of Ortiz de Malgarejo, personal opponents of Olivares. One of the objects of Philip IV's visit to Seville in March 1624 was to break this opposition. While the king was being regaled in a series of fiestas, Olivares presided over a session of the *cabildo* and handled it with such effect that it not only ratified agreement to the proposals before the cortes but also granted the king a benevolence of 30,000 ducats.

Meanwhile, however, other towns had decided to withhold ratification, and the cortes continued discussing the issue throughout 1624.[78] They maintained their opposition to virtually all the new taxes, particularly to those on offices, grants, *juros* and *censos*, for these affected the vital interests of the minor nobility, whom the cortes in effect represented. The result was that these particular taxes, advantageous in their social as well as their financial implications as they would fall on the privileged and the unproductive, were eventually dropped, and the cortes confined themselves to approving a continuation of the *millones*, at the rate of 2 million ducats a year for six years, the money to be raised by taxes on basic consumer goods. Among the conditions attached to this grant was one that the crown should impose no extraordinary taxation outside the cortes; although the king agreed his ministers soon found ways of evading it. As for the attempt of the towns to retain in their own hands ratification of votes on subsidies, this hardly survived the cortes of 1623–29. The crown disliked the device: it insisted on deputies having full voting powers, and it met with little resistance. The incident, in fact, simply underlined two characteristics of the cortes of Castile, their class interest and their limited function.

How can the subservience of the cortes be explained? The basic reason was their lack of legislative power, which deprived them of a bargaining device and prevented them from insisting on redress of grievances before grant of supplies. They were, moreover, subject to government pressure of various kinds, ranging from holding the cortes to inconveniently lengthy sessions to outright corruption. The deputies were not paid a salary by their constituencies but received emoluments of one kind and another from the government. Their expenses were defrayed from a percentage of the subsidies they voted; in addition they spent much of their time in Madrid negotiating for offices, pensions and honours for themselves and their relatives, most of which were forthcoming if they co-operated with the crown. Methods of blatant bribery and corruption were first introduced by Lerma; Olivares and his successor, Luis de Haro, employed a mixture of cajolery and intimidation.

[78] *Actas*, xlii, *passim*.

As though this were not enough they were forced to admit to full membership of their sessions senior ministers of the crown, such as the president of the Council of Finance and the favourites Lerma and Olivares.[79]

Yet these factors do not in themselves completely account for the co-operation of the cortes of Castile with the crown. Their subservience was more apparent than real and it masked a measure of self-interest. They were generous, no doubt, but their generosity tended to be at the expense of sectors of society other than the ones they represented. The cities and towns of Castile were dominated by aristocratic oligarchies; more particularly their government and economy were in the hands of the middle and lower nobility, who secured in the localities power to which they could not aspire at the centre. They were strategically placed to defend their property and their interests,, for many taxes, and all those granted by the cortes, were administered by the municipalities. And, through the deputies whom they sent to the cortes, they were in a position to influence the actual incidence of taxation. In the sixteenth century the oligarchies of the larger towns had insisted on compounding the *alcabala*, one of the major taxes of Castile, for an agreed yearly payment. The reasoning behind this move was that in an age of inflation, with expanding trade and profits, it was advantageous to stabilise a sales-tax at a fixed level, particularly as this was one of the few taxes from which the nobility were not exempt. Subsequently, to compensate the crown for its losses on the *alcabala*, the cortes authorised a series of subsidies known as the *servicios ordinarios y extraordinarios*, payment of which was confined to commoners.[80] Thus the nobility arbitrarily passed on the tax burden to others. As there were relatively few commoners in northern Spain, a region notoriously populous in *hidalgos*, the north was effectively over-assessed compared to the centre and the south, with consequent economic hardship. The difficulties experienced by some regions in meeting their quota caused this tax, too, to be stabilised, and from 1591 its yield was fixed at 405,000 ducats a year. Consequently, like the *alcabala*, its yield to the crown failed to keep up with inflation. So it in turn was supplemented by a further series of subsidies known as the *servicios de millones*, which were first voted by the cortes towards the end of Philip II's reign. These were designed to raise 2 million ducats a year, by means of taxes on the *cuatro especies*, that is on wine, meat, oil and vinegar. These subsidies were generously renewed throughout the reigns of Philip III and Philip IV, and under pressure of the crown they showed a tendency to rise and to be extended to further

[79] Cánovas, *Estudios*, i, 125–33; Marañón, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

[80] On the grants of the cortes see Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 232–80, and the same author's 'La desigualdad contributiva en Castilla durante el siglo XVII', *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español*, xxi–xxii (1951–52), 1222–68.

commodities. In 1626 the cortes raised the *millones* subsidy from 2 million to 4 million ducats a year, by means of new taxes on paper, salt, and ship anchorage. In 1632 they granted an extra subsidy of 2½ million ducats every six years. And temporary subsidies were voted from time to time for specific items of expenditure and charged on various consumer goods.

From the *millones* the nobility were not exempt: in the grant of 1611 it was explicitly stated that there were to be no exemptions. Did this imply a change of fiscal policy on the part of the cortes? The change was more apparent than real. In the first place the affluent sectors whom they represented were less sensitive to taxes on basic foodstuffs than were the masses of labouring poor; in conjunction with the *alcabala* and local excise duties the *millones* were an intolerable burden on agriculture and on the farmers and peasants who practised it. Secondly, in a period when the financial officers of the crown were looking with disfavour on fiscal privilege, it obviously made sense for the nobility to choose the lesser of two evils, a purchase tax rather than a property tax. This is precisely what the cortes did when, as has been seen, they sabotaged the crown's proposals for taxes on public offices, pensions, *juros* and *censos*—all of which were vital property interests to the middle and lower nobility—and preferred instead to renew the *millones*. Finally, through their control of local government, the nobility were able so to administer the *millones* that they themselves paid as little as possible and even in some cases made a profit out of them, as did those officials who actually handled the tax and those nobles who sold untaxed goods from their own estates in their own houses in a respectable form of contraband.

Once the cortes had defined, and the crown had accepted, the type of taxation they preferred, there was little reason for their further convocation. They continued to meet in the 1630's and 1640's, and they were summoned again in 1655 and 1660, but their renewal of the *millones* was now fairly automatic. The last cortes of Castile to be held in the seventeenth century were those of 1662. From 1668 the *millones* were renewed by the *junta de asistentes a cortes*, the administrative commission of the cortes, which maintained the legal fiction of representation by sending circular letters to the towns indicating the need to renew the grant for a further six years.

Castile had been taxed too long and too heavily for anyone to mourn the demise of its cortes. Yet in one sense at least the cortes spoke for Castile. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries they often tried to insist that the money voted be spent exclusively on Castile, particularly on naval armament and defence of the Indies trade, and they had tried to appropriate supplies to this effect.[81] Their priorities were sound enough, and they

[81] José Martínez Cardos, 'Las Indias y las Cortes de Castilla durante los siglos XVI y XVII' *Revista de Indias*, xvi (1956), 207–65, 357–412.

were based on the conviction that Castile was bleeding itself in order to send supplies to other provinces which did not contribute fairly to their own defence, much less to the common cause of the Monarchy. As taxation of Castile reached saturation point and brought diminishing returns, this conviction began to be shared by royal officials and advisers, and the non-Castilian provinces came under closer scrutiny. The call to action was given by Olivares.

CHAPTER V

THE GREAT CRISIS: 1640 AND AFTER

1. The Union of Arms

The defence of Spanish interests in Europe and overseas was more than Castile could bear alone. The Thirty Years War laid an extra burden on a land already depopulated and impoverished by previous calls on its resources. Increasing demands on Castile coincided with rapid diminution of Castile's remaining assets. The transatlantic trade now entered a period of severe crisis; it experienced a major contraction in the years 1629–31, which anticipated the great collapse of 1639–41.[1] The crown was thus starved of its revenue and the economy of its life-blood. It was not Castilian prejudice, therefore, but fiscal and military emergency which caused the central government to look more closely at the non-Castilian provinces and to seek to tap their resources.

Economists and ministers alike were calling for a more equitable distribution of taxation within the empire and demanding that the various provinces should pay at least for their own defence. In the reforming environment of the early 1620's the demands became more pressing. Fernández Navarrete spoke for many *arbitristas* when he argued that Castile was paying more than its fair share of defence costs: 'as far as possible there should be a just and proportionate adjustment of taxation in the Provinces, so that the whole weight does not fall on the centre'.[2] In April 1622 the Council of Finance was even more explicit:

> The greatest benefit from these frontier garrisons accrues to the provinces themselves, and so they should reasonably be expected to maintain them, and Castile should not have to bear the entire burden, especially when the royal revenues are in such an impossible state, and the Castilians so exhausted and oppressed with tributes.[3]

Similar arguments had long been used by the cortes of Castile. A royal decree of 28 October 1622 to the towns represented in the cortes discussed the possibility of replacing the *millones* by a subsidy guaranteed to maintain 30,000 troops and of extending this to other provinces:

[1] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1797–1848.
[2] *Conservación de monarquías*, p. 496.
[3] Quoted in Elliott, *Revolt of the Catalans*, p. 192 .

> The greatest reform would be an arrangement whereby the other provinces, Aragon, Portugal, Navarre, Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa, made an equivalent contribution towards troops, for although they benefit equally from the defence and conservation of the Monarchy they have hitherto escaped the costs. They have no justification for their exemption. Natural justice insists that all those who enjoy common benefits should make appropriate contributions. Moreover, they do not possess *fueros* or laws granting exemption; and, even if they did, they would not be justified in invoking them.[4]

These were likely to remain pious aspirations unless the central government was prepared to force the issue. The Italian states, it is true, contributed towards imperial defence in Italy, and they probably bore the greatest burden after Castile. The Low Countries contributed less, granted their resources, but they were in the front line of almost permanent warfare. Navarre, Aragon and Valencia gave only small and occasional amounts. Portugal and Catalonia utterly refused to contribute to general defence costs, as though what happened beyond their frontiers was no concern of theirs.[5] But the constitutional structure of the Spanish empire, and the diversity of laws within it, prevented the central government from taxing the periphery by executive means, and raised the issue of royal prerogative *versus* regional privilege. This was the problem which Olivares inherited in 1621 and to which he brought his feverish and dynamic talents. He took up ideas of fiscal uniformity which had been in the air for some time and incorporated them into a theory of empire. He then spent the rest of his political life attempting to apply the theory.

It was the object of Olivares to rationalise the imperial machinery in order to make it an efficient instrument of defence; this could be done by drawing into a common pool all the Monarchy's resources of manpower and revenue for deployment where and when they were needed. To do this the empire had to be unified, and the obstacles were the different constitutions of the component parts. A precondition of uniform recruitment and taxation was a uniform law, and this inevitably meant Castilian law. But responsibilities would bring rewards. In return for their constitutional sacrifices, the provinces would receive the fruits of empire—offices and opportunities—as well as its burdens. To this extent Olivares was a champion not of Castile but of Spain, of a new and unified Spain where rights and duties were equally shared.[6]

[4] Quoted in González Palencia, *La Junta de Reformación*, p. 406.
[5] See Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 157–59.
[6] Elliott, *op. cit.*, pp. 198–208.

These ideas were developed by Olivares in a secret memorandum which he presented to Philip IV early in 1625.[7] At the heart of his argument was the idea of unification:

> The most important thing in Your Majesty's Monarchy is for you to become king of Spain: by this I mean, Sir, that Your Majesty should not be content with being king of Portugal, of Aragon, of Valencia and count of Barcelona, but should secretly plan and work to reduce these kingdoms of which Spain is composed to the style and laws of Castile, with no difference whatsoever. And if Your Majesty achieves this, you will be the most powerful prince in the world.

But how was this object to be achieved? One method, according to Olivares, was to follow a policy of attraction, offering non-Castilians favours, offices, titles and brides in Castile; this was the best method, but the slowest. Alternatively the king could negotiate with the various provinces, but he should do this from a position of strength while his armed forces were not occupied on foreign fronts. There remained a 'third way'. The king could go in person to the province in question and provoke a rebellion there; this would give him a pretext for using an army to restore law and order, and thereby provide an opportunity to reorganise the province in conformity with Castile on the basis of conquest. This method, though not so justified as the others, would be more effective.

Olivares seems to have included the 'third way' in order to give the king a complete picture of the various options open to him, not because he favoured its adoption. There is no evidence that he ever sought to implement the proposal, while there is ample evidence that he preferred the ways of attraction and negotiation. For he recognised the aspirations of the non-Castilians and their resentment at exclusion from honours, offices and privileges, and he always argued that they should have equality of opportunity with Castile. These are not the sentiments of a crude Castilian nationalist: they imply a concept of empire transcending particularism, either of Castile or of the other parts. In the years following this memorandum, it is true, Olivares did little to widen the distribution of offices, apart from appointing an Aragonese, Miguel Santos de San Pedro, to the presidency of the Council of Castile. But the reason for his diffidence may have been the difficulty of synchronising this reform with evidence of co-operation from the periphery. Such a plan would certainly provoke opposition in Castile and would have to be accompanied by a clear demonstration that the periphery was assuming its obligations.

[7] Printed in part in Marañón, *op. cit.*, appendix xviii, pp. 440–47; see also Elliott, *op. cit.*, pp. 199–203; Eulogio Zudaire Huarte, 'Ideario político de D. Gaspar de Guzmán, privado de Felipe IV', *Hispania*, xxv (1965), 413–25; Hume, *op. cit.*, pp. 142–43.

And this, as will be seen, was something which Olivares could not guarantee. Yet he remained remarkably free of the prejudices shared by most Castilian aristocrats, who regarded their regional neighbours with some contempt and treated them as second-class citizens. Olivares had no time for this attitude, and in the Council of State in 1632 he rebuked those who made discriminatory remarks against Catalans: 'In saying "Spaniards" it must be understood that there is no difference between one nation and another of those included within the limits of Spain, and the same is to be understood of the Portuguese as of the Catalans'.[8]

As assimilation was a lengthy process and force not seriously contemplated, the memorandum of 1625 remained a long-term plan, to be achieved by evolutionary rather than revolutionary means. For the immediate defence of the empire and relief of Castile he had a second plan, more pragmatic in its approach, the co-called Union of Arms. This was designed to secure an army of reservists, 140,000 strong, recruited and paid in appropriate proportions by the various provinces, for deployment wherever and whenever an emergency occurred. From each according to its resources, to each according to its needs. The idea was sound enough in principle and promising in prospects, for military and financial co-operation could be a step towards political unification. But it still came up against the autonomous rights of the regions. A decree from Madrid was not likely to overcome constitutional objections to raising money and troops in Aragon, Valencia and Catalonia for use outside these provinces. These may have been archaic privileges, inappropriate in a seventeenth-century state, but they could not be circumvented. There was no short cut to unification, only a long and tortuous road, with many pitfalls and obstacles. And at the end of it what had Olivares to offer the provinces? An interminable war and a devastated Castile, objects not of attraction but revulsion.

The eastern regions prepared for battle, mobilising their legal reserves and polishing their constitutional weapons. Their first line of defence was their cortes. In January 1626 Philip IV opened the cortes of Aragon at Barbastro; despite the efforts of Olivares—a mixture of bullying and bribery—they proved decidedly refractory, and they had offered nothing to the Union of Arms when in March the king moved on to Monzón, where he had summoned the cortes of Valencia. The Valencians, too, were stubborn; they pleaded great poverty as a result of the expulsion of the moriscos and, like the Aragonese, they refused to supply troops for service outside the province. Olivares thereupon lowered his demands, making the military service voluntary but still insisting on the money to pay the men. After long and acrimonious debates the cortes of Valencia were finally persuaded to vote a

[8] Quoted in Elliott, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

subsidy of 1,080,000 ducats on these terms; this the king accepted as sufficient to maintain 1,000 infantrymen for fifteen years, at the rate of 72,000 ducats a year. Eventually the Aragonese accepted similar terms, offering either 2,000 paid volunteers for fifteen years or 144,000 ducats a year to maintain this number of men.[9]

The Catalans were more difficult. They had already had one brush with Philip IV over their refusal to accept a viceroy nominated by Madrid before the king had visited them and taken the traditional oath to observe their laws; to resolve this conflict the central government had had to back down on two important items it had fought for in the previous reign, the carrying of arms and the Barcelona 'fifths'.[10] When, on 28 March 1626, the king opened in Barcelona the first cortes for twenty-seven years the Catalans were no more ready to co-operate.[11] The Catalan cortes, unlike those of Castile, had legislative powers, and they regarded law-making as their first function; their second function was to secure redress of grievances. Only after securing satisfaction on these two matters would they pass to the third stage of their proceedings, the granting of supplies; these depended on unanimity throughout the three estates of the cortes and were accompanied by receipt of *mercedes*, or royal favours. The cortes possessed a formidable instrument of resistance—the act of dissent, which any member could make in matters of grace and justice and which, if accepted, then stopped all proceedings. The crown could only overcome this tactic if it were prepared to buy agreement with huge concessions.

Olivares merely wanted a quick vote of subsidy, but he restrained himself and accepted the order of proceedings with good grace. By 18 April, however, the royal patience was wearing thin, and the cortes were presented with an urgent message from Philip IV:

> My children, one and a thousand times I say and repeat that I have no wish to remove your *fueros* and immunities, but only to give you many new ones. To serve with paid men, as is proposed to you, is not to infringe your constitutions nor to do anything contrary to custom, but to revive the glory of your nation, and the name that for so long has been forgotten, but was once feared throughout Europe. And by this means I wish your countrymen to obtain the leading places in my kingdoms—places to which their valour and heroism will surely take them.[12]

[9] Danvila, *El poder civil en España*, iii, 59–76, for extracts of debates at Monzón and Barbastro. The sums voted, small in themselves, were further eroded by resistance to actual collection.

[10] Elliott, *op. cit.*, pp. 148–81; Eulogio Zudaire Huarte, *El Conde-Duque y Cataluña* (Madrid, 1964), pp. 1–33; see above, pp. 55–9.

[11] Elliott, *op. cit.*, pp. 215–47; Zudaire Huarte, *op. cit.*, pp. 35–59.

[12] Quoted in Elliott, *op. cit.*, pp. 230–31.

The cortes were not impressed by this call to greatness, but looked instead at its cost, 16,000 men. This, they argued, was beyond the capacity of Catalonia and a violation of its laws. So they returned to their practice of dissent; one town after another laid claim to fiscal and administrative concessions, and Barcelona led the way. No monarch could possibly submit to such demands if he wished to remain sovereign and solvent. The most that Olivares was prepared to concede was to cancel the request for paid infantrymen and to take instead a subsidy of 250,000 ducats a year for fifteen years. 'The money is to be spent solely in this province, for the defence of its frontiers and the upkeep of galleys, not galleons. It is to be entirely collected by natives of the province, and is not to pass through the hands of royal officials.'[13] But the cortes found the new version no more acceptable than the old.

Olivares's estimate suffered to some degree from defective statistics. He assumed—as many Catalans did—that the population of the principality amounted to about 1 million. In fact it was probably no more than 400,000.[14] This population paid some 160,000 *lliures* a year in local taxes to the *Diputació*, the standing committee of the cortes. In addition Olivares was asking for 260,000 *lliures* a year for the central government. He was probably asking too much. Did the Catalans protest too much? The principality, if not as wealthy as Olivares imagined, was certainly wealthier than Aragon and Valencia, and these provinces decided, reluctantly, to co-operate with the crown. Could not the funds of the *Diputació* serve to defray a portion of the Catalan contribution? Unfortunately, in spite of the *Diputació's* regular income over the last twenty years, its funds had been exhausted by a combination of peculation and maladministration. Catalan institutions were better equipped to resist than to govern. Olivares tried to ease the task of the local administration by offering to cancel the arrears of 'fifths' of all towns which voted the required subsidy and to make no further claims on them until the next cortes. But weeks of argument, negotiation and bribery were of no avail. On 3 May, in conditions of near riot, the cortes refused to vote the subsidy.[15] The next day the king left Barcelona in disgust.

On his return to Castile Olivares published the Union of Arms as though it were an accomplished fact and Castile were now going to be relieved of its burdens. But this was propaganda and no one was deceived. Castile and its dependencies continued to bear the brunt of defence expenditure. Peru was assigned a quota of 350,000 ducats, Mexico 250,000, to be applied to naval defence on the transatlantic route. So the colonies, already heavily taxed,

[13] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 237.

[14] J. Nadal and E. Giralt, *La population catalane de 1553 à 1717* (Paris, 1960), pp. 40–41, 341–44; Vilar, *La Catalogne dans l'Espagne moderne*, i, 617–20, 630.

[15] Carrera Pujal, *Historia política y económica de Cataluña*, i, 196.

made their contribution to the Union of Arms and in a form which became in fact a new permanent tax.[16] But Catalonia continued to resist, becoming, in its very isolation, a political as well as a fiscal problem, and one which Olivares had committed himself to solving. To the accompaniment of mounting resentment in Catalonia and of growing anti-Catalan sentiment among the Castilian ruling class, Olivares began to turn the screw more tightly on the principality, at a time, 1629–32, when commercial depression and plague were further reducing its fiscal capacity.[17] His methods were various. First he subverted the independence of the Council of Aragon, which he regarded as too closely tied to regional interests. In February 1628 the king replaced the office of vice-chancellor, hitherto a preserve of natives of the eastern provinces, by that of president, after the fashion of the other councils; and to the new office was appointed the marquis of Montesclaros, a close friend of Olivares. The duke of Medina de las Torres, Olivares's son-in-law, became treasurer-general. But the key man in Olivares's system was Jerónimo de Villanueva, an Aragonese from a long-established bureaucratic dynasty. Nominally Villanueva was simply *protonotario* of the Council of Aragon, an official in the chancery section of the Council. In fact he was to Olivares what Olivares was to the king, a *valido*. From 1626 he began to dominate the Council of Aragon and to control its business with the eastern provinces. He became, in addition, secretary of the Council of State, a member of the Council of War, and a member of all the important juntas. A powerful, intolerant, and ruthless man, with a hint of religious heterodoxy about him, Villanueva was eager to relieve Olivares of the day-to-day burden of eastern affairs, much as Olivares relieved the king of the burden of empire.

Catalonia, meanwhile, with Barcelona in the lead, stubbornly refused to co-operate. Olivares therefore decided to appeal once more to the Catalan cortes. It is difficult to see what he hoped to achieve. In matters of *fueros* there were probably only two courses of action, either to leave well alone or to act with speed and force. Lengthy discussion was likely to produce neither peace nor profit. Yet in this his second appeal to Catalonia Olivares was prepared to give the cortes even more time to make up its mind. The king's place in Barcelona was taken by his brother, the Cardinal Infante Ferdinand, who acted simultaneously as president of the cortes and viceroy of Catalonia, while the count of Oñate was appointed his political adviser. The results were not encouraging. The business of the cortes was brought to a halt while the city of Barcelona wrangled interminably over its rights, privileges and demands, and resisted any concession to the crown. There is some evidence that members of the corrupt *Diputació* were working to sabotage relations

[16] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *op. cit.*, pp. 317–19.

[17] Elliott, *op. cit.*, pp. 248–72.

between the cortes and the crown in order to prevent investigation of the *Diputació* itself. But subversion, if it took place, was hardly necessary. By now the crown did not even know how to withdraw from the conflict without loss of prestige. In August 1632 its exasperated officials in Barcelona were instructed to display the utmost 'tolerance and gentleness, and be prepared to consider any measure that would conclude the Cortes to the general satisfaction, even if it brings little benefit to the royal treasury'.[18] For the crown there was little satisfaction and even less benefit. At the end of October the cortes were prorogued. Catalonia still remained outside the Union of Arms and still constituted the major obstacle to Olivares's plans for fiscal uniformity.

2. The Revolt of Catalonia

For the government of Philip IV Catalonia was first a fiscal problem. Since 1626 it had also been a political problem. In May 1635, with the outbreak of the Franco-Spanish war, it became part of Spain's international problems. France's entry into the Thirty Years War had been foreseen for some time, but, harassed as it was on many fronts, the Spanish government was ill-prepared for the emergency. Now it had to improvise the raising of troops and money from a depopulated and impoverished community. Its methods were arbitrary taxation reinforced by appeals to patriotism.[19] *Juros* were heavily taxed, millions of ducats of vellon were coined, offices were sold on an unprecedented scale, and the cortes of Castile were browbeaten into voting new subsidies. Ministers were sent into the provinces to raise troops and loans. The higher nobility were ordered to raise companies at their own cost, *hidalgos* to hold themselves ready for military service. In Castile there was some response to these promptings, but it seemed like a drop in the ocean of Spain's commitments. Defence expenditure for 1636 exceeded 9 million escudos, most of it for the Low Countries. In 1637 defence and government costs rose to over 13 million escudos, while income was no more than 7¼ million; and *asientos* were becoming more difficult to obtain. The government now lived from hand to mouth, in the midst of financial chaos which lasted until the end of the reign.

The military returns from this expenditure were not impressive. In 1635 the Cardinal Infante took the offensive against France, striking hopefully from the Low Countries towards Paris; by August 1636 his army had reached Corbie. But his superiors in Madrid could not help him by opening a second front in southern France, and the Spanish war effort gradually lost its momentum. In October 1637 the Dutch recaptured Breda. In December 1638 Bernard of Weimar took Breisach, thus cutting the route from Milan

[18] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 282. [19] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 51–60.

to the Low Countries. Attempts to supply and reinforce the northern army by sea were extremely hazardous and culminated in a major naval disaster; on 21 October 1639 Admiral Tromp destroyed the fleet of Antonio de Oquendo at the battle of the Downs. These reverses were due not so much to Spain's weakness as to her inability to concentrate her not inconsiderable military power on any one sector at any one time. She was now seriously overcommitted, with too many enemies and no major allies. Olivares appreciated the situation and in the late 1630's he seriously sought peace. 'God wants us to make peace', he remarked, 'for he is visibly depriving us of all the means of making war'.[20] By 1640 he had drastically reduced his terms in an effort to liquidate the war with France. But there was a limit to what he could concede. He could not countenance Dutch conquests in Brazil and expect to retain Portuguese allegiance.[21] And Richelieu refused to break his alliance with the Dutch and to press them into relinquishing their position in Brazil. So Olivares had to continue to plan for war. But where could he get additional supplies? American revenue in 1639 was not enough to cover the *asientos*; in 1640 nothing arrived from the Indies, and the whole budget was thrown out of gear. In these circumstances contributions from outside Castile were more urgently needed than ever. So attention was again focused on Catalonia.

By now, however, the Catalan problem had acquired a new dimension. From the standpoint of Madrid Catalonia was no longer simply a source to be exploited but a strategic problem to be solved, for Catalonia was France's immediate neighbour and Spain's outer defence against French invasion. Was Catalonia a security risk? The suspicion haunted some minds in Castile, but not that of Olivares. With typical ebullience he saw war on the Pyrenees front as a challenge which, if firmly grasped, might transform Catalonia from a liability into an asset. It became his policy in fact to force Catalonia into contributing to imperial defence by making the province a theatre of operations in the war with France.[22] This was not the sinister project so frequently attributed to Olivares. It was not his intention to put an army into Catalonia in order deliberately to provoke a rebellion, the crushing of which would then be a pretext to abolish Catalan liberties; even Olivares at his most extreme did not plan the total destruction of the Catalan constitutions. He simply wanted to involve Catalonia in the problems, and therefore the finances, of the Monarchy, and so to end its political and fiscal immunity.

Olivares worked on this principle from late 1635. But it was not easy to implement. Catalan resistance to taxation continued. Between 1626 and

[20] Report of Olivares to king, March 1640, in Cánovas, *Estudios*, i, 414.
[21] See below, pp. 119–21.
[22] Elliott, *op. cit.*, pp. 356–61, 375–90; Zudaire Huarte, *op. cit.*, pp. 119–26.

1637, it is true, Barcelona provided 308,500 *lliures* in loans or gifts to the crown; but this was only half the value of arrears of 'fifths' owed by the city since 1599.[23] And it was not taxation. Recruitment of troops was equally difficult. The Catalans refused to supply a contingent for the hard-pressed Italian front. In the course of 1637 they also refused to supply troops for a diversionary blow into Languedoc to relieve the pressure on Italy and the Low Countries. In 1638, when French forces penetrated into Guipúzcoa and laid siege to Fuenterrabía, contingents from virtually the whole of Spain, including Aragon and Valencia, came to the rescue of the beleaguered town. Again Catalonia was absent. The Catalans, of course, invoked their constitutions, which prevented their recruitment for duties outside their own frontiers. But no power could possibly conduct a war on these principles, with one hand tied behind its back, never able to anticipate an attack or to take the offensive. Yet the Catalans were adamant. And now the resistance of Barcelona was reinforced by that of a resurgent *Diputació*, posing once again as the defender of the laws and liberties of the fatherland and taking advantage of the crown's financial difficulties to bargain more toughly.

If the laws of Catalonia frustrated legitimate defence interests there was an arguable case for changing the laws. This, at any rate, seems to have been the assumption of Olivares and his advisers. When they planned military operations for 1639 they deliberately chose Catalonia as the front on which to fight France, in order, among other things, to force Catalonia to contribute to the war effort, 'finding itself directly involved, as up to now it seems not to have been involved, with the common welfare of the Monarchy and of these kingdoms'.[24] In the event the campaign brought little credit to Madrid or Barcelona. Operations were seriously handicapped by constant bickering over the raising and payment of troops in the principality, and by mutual recriminations over Castillian charges that Catalan troops were deserting on a large scale. Military ineptitude compounded the confusion; and Salces, having been foolishly lost, was extravagantly recovered, at heavy cost in Catalan lives. Nevertheless, as a result of this campaign, Catalonia had been hounded into raising troops, these had been harried to the front, and a royal army about 9,000 strong now wintered in Catalonia in preparation for the spring campaign in 1640. Inevitably the army infringed the constitutions, for these defined Catalan obligations of billeting in such a way that they were insufficient for basic maintenance. This in turn affected the behaviour of the troops, whose excesses Viceroy Santa Coloma was too weak to prevent and the Catalans too exasperated to stomach.

By the end of February 1640 the patience of Olivares was exhausted. 'We always have to look and see if a constitution says this or that', he wrote to

[23] Elliott, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

[24] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 361.

Santa Coloma. 'We have to discover what the customary usage is, even when it is a question of the supreme law, of the actual preservation and defence of the province. . . . The Catalans ought to see more of the world than Catalonia'.[25] He ordered firmer measures for billeting and payment of troops in Catalonia, and for further recruitment there. A member of the *Diputació* and two members of Barcelona city council were gaoled. And preparations were made to involve Catalonia irremediably in the campaign of 1640. Malice played no part in the count duke's policy: far from trying to provoke the Catalans into revolt, he was complacent enough to believe they were basically loyal.

The Catalans, too, had had enough. Suddenly, in the first weeks of May 1640, the pent-up resentments of the last four decades and the more immediate anger at the presence of the royal army exploded into rebellion. Peasants in the western areas of Gerona and La Selva attacked the *tercios* which were billeted on them. Violence was ruthless, organised, and inflamed by agitators. By the end of May peasant forces had infiltrated Barcelona. In June they were joined by the *segadors*, casual labourers, who soon had the city at their mercy. Royal judges were hunted like animals at bay, and the viceroy was killed on a beach of Barcelona as he sought to embark for safety.

The reaction of Madrid to these events was predictable. Ministers urged that the time had come to crush Catalonia once and for all. Olivares did not share this view. He still clung to his belief that reasonable accommodation was possible and that the Catalans would respond to a genuine offer of equal status and opportunity within the Monarchy.[26] He therefore advocated leniency and the granting of a general pardon. The murder of the viceroy, however, shattered even Olivares; in a mood of hatred and despair he now lost his faith in the Catalans and appreciated that he had a major rebellion on his hands which no government could condone. But for the moment the government was impotent. Its armies and resources were already committed on several fronts and could not be focused on Catalonia.

If the rebellion was beyond the control of the government, it was soon out of the hands of the Catalan leaders. For alongside the political opposition which they represented there was a social revolution over which they had no control. From the beginning the rebels had attacked the property and the persons of wealthy citizens. Rural agitators infiltrated into the towns and collaborated with lawless elements among the urban poor. The leadership of Barcelona and its oligarchy was brushed aside as the forces of agrarian discontent swept into action. This was a rebellion of impoverished and landless peasants against wealthy farmers and noble landowners; of the underprivileged

[25] Olivares to Santa Coloma, 29 February 1640, *ibid.*, pp. 400–1.

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 433–42.

in the towns against the urban oligarchies; of repressed bandit elements against the forces of law and order.[27] The Catalan leaders had unleashed a tiger, and soon their country was rent by civil war as well as by revolution. Caught between the authority of the king and the radicalism of the mob, the leaders of the political revolution turned to France. The inconsistency of their position was now fully exposed. For all their opposition to the king they were incapable of ruling Catalonia independently, and so they sought the protection of the king's enemies. The *Diputació*, or people acting on its behalf, seem to have established contact with France as early as April 1640, before the revolution began.[28] The initiative was taken by Pau Claris, canon of Urgell, member of the *Diputació* and a leader of resistance to Madrid, and Francesc de Tamarit, another member of the *Diputació*, whose political activities had recently landed him in jail. And for his part Richelieu had his agents in Catalonia.

As the news from Catalonia became worse, Olivares too was caught in a dilemma. To offer reconciliation might be interpreted as weakness and set a bad example to other equally hard-pressed provinces. To crush Catalonia by military action, on the other hand, he really needed peace with France, as Richelieu knew to his advantage. Yet military action was now called for. Since the loss of Barcelona the government had used the port of Tortosa for the movement of troops to Italy and for supplying the remnants of its forces on the Catalan front. But in July Tortosa too revolted and deprived Spain of a vital link in its imperial communications. So preparations were made to send an army against Catalonia. Even now the intention of Olivares was not to destroy Catalonia's constitutions but only 'those laws which specifically obstruct good government and the administration of justice, and which stand in the way of uniformity with the other kingdoms of the Crown'.[29] As Castile laboriously mobilised, Catalonia too began to look to its defences. The *Diputació* could not rely on patriotism alone, for the Catalans were no more disposed to accept military service for defence against Castile than they had been for defence against France. So on 24 September the *Diputació* submitted a formal request to Paris for French protection and military assistance. And in October it entered into an agreement with France whereby it allowed French ships to use Catalan ports and undertook to pay for the upkeep of 3,000 troops which France would send to Catalonia.[30]

As Olivares remarked, Spain had another Holland on its hands. He was now dispirited and pessimistic, believing that this was a war which no one

[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 431–32, 459–65; Zudaire Huarte, *op. cit.*, pp. 249–82.
[28] José Sanabre, *La acción de Francia en Cataluña en la pugna por la hegemonía de Europa* (1640–1659) (Barcelona, 1956), pp. 91–94; Zudaire Huarte, *op. cit.*, pp. 283–86, 299–300.
[29] Paper by Olivares, 11 August 1640, in Elliott, *op. cit.*, pp. 497–98.
[30] Sanabre, *op. cit.*, pp. 103–6.

could win, 'for one cannot talk of success in an action against one's own vassals, in which all gain must be loss'.[31] He had great difficulty in mobilising an army in Castile and he had to rely on methods which had hardly changed since the middle ages. City militias were ordered to stand to, nobles to arm their vassals, *hidalgos* and *caballeros* of the military orders to follow the king to war.[32] The result was disappointing. Barely 1,000 nobility and gentry answered the call, and troops were equally difficult to find. When an army of 20,000 was finally assembled, it seemed the height of folly to entrust this precious commodity to the command of the marquis of los Vélez, viceroy elect of Catalonia, who had no military experience and few qualities of leadership. Tortosa was taken without much opposition at the end of November, but in the advance on Barcelona the army's behaviour, particularly the massacre of prisoners, reinforced the Catalans' determination to resist. On 23 January 1641 the principality placed itself under the government of the king of France in return for French military protection. The joint Catalan–French forces successfully defended Barcelona against the army of Castile, and the incompetent los Vélez promptly ordered a retreat. There would be no prompt return.

While Spain suffered temporary dismemberment by the revolt of Catalonia, the Catalans suffered much more. Now, with cruel irony, they had achieved a kind of parity with Castile: in the years following 1640 they too became the victims of war, and they too were forced to endure heavy defence expenditure, monetary inflation, economic stagnation, plague, famine, and finally loss of fertile territory.[33] They acquired the burden of power without any of the fruits. Their last state was worse than their first.

French policy in Catalonia was dominated by military considerations; they now had a base in Spain, to be used primarily for striking into Aragon and Valencia. They appointed a French viceroy and packed the administration with known friends of France. They insisted on the Catalans' billeting, supplying and paying the French troops, who looked increasingly like an army of occupation.[34] Catalonia became merely one of the various French theatres of war. In 1642, with the conquest of Rosellón and the capture of Monzón and Lérida, it was a successful theatre. But in 1643–44 Philip IV's armies began to strike back, recovering Monzón and Lérida where, in July 1644, the king took a solemn oath to observe the Catalan constitutions. Between 1646 and 1648 the French were held to a stalemate in Catalonia; when the Peace of Westphalia deprived them of their Dutch allies and the Fronde began to

[31] Quoted in Elliott, *op. cit.*, p. 504.
[32] Domínguez Ortiz, 'La movilización de la nobleza castellana en 1640', *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español*, XXV (1955), 799–823.
[33] Vilar, *op. cit.*, i, 633.
[34] Sanabre, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

occupy their attentions at home, Catalonia ceased to figure prominently in French calculations.

France exploited Catalonia economically as well as militarily. French merchants poured grain and manufactured goods into the newly acquired market, and it soon became clear that commercially Catalonia had even less future with France than with Castile.[35] Unlike the Dutch, the Catalans had no colonial trade as a basis for independent growth; and as they constituted no threat to Castile's American monopoly their cause attracted little international interest.[36] The final blow to Catalan fortunes was delivered by the great plague of 1650–54 which caused severe mortality—claiming 36,000 victims in Barcelona alone—among a people already suffering from wartime malnutrition.[37]

The substitution of Louis XIII of France for Philip IV of Spain solved none of Catalonia's problems. All the complaints the Catalans had held against Castile they now held against France, but to a greater degree, and with less understanding from the absolutist government in Paris. Internal divisions endemic in the principality came to the surface once more, and Catalonia was split between the partisans of France and those of Spain, between the few who profited from offices and opportunities with the French and the many who resented the depredations of the French armies and the predominance of French merchants. The growing alienation from France presented Philip IV with the opportunity to make a supreme bid to recover the principality. In mid-1651 the Spanish army under Don John of Austria, Philip IV's bastard son, advanced on Barcelona and began a lengthy siege of the city, while naval forces established a blockade. The French were unable to relieve Barcelona and it surrendered on 13 October 1652, accepting the sovereignty of Philip IV, with Don John as his viceroy, in return for a general amnesty and the king's promise to preserve the constitutions.[38] France still held Rosellón and continued to wage frontier warfare, but its object was now simply to win bargaining counters for the peace table. It had some success. By the Peace of the Pyrenees (7 November 1659) Spain—and Catalonia—lost both Rosellón and Conflent. But Spain had regained the allegiance of Catalonia and the Catalans could argue that they had preserved their laws and privileges. The Catalan ruling class had learnt some lessons. For the maintenance of their status and property and the supply of law and order they needed a superior sovereignty; their country did not possess the resources for independence and it did not wish to be a satellite of France; the best terms they could get were those from Spain.

[35] E. Giralt, 'La colonia mercantil francesa de Barcelona', *Estudios de Historia Moderna*, vi (Barcelona, 1956), 217–78.

[36] Sanabre, *op. cit.*, pp. 354–55. [37] Nadal and Giralt, *La population catalane*, pp. 42–44.

[38] Sanabre, *op. cit.*, pp. 533–44; Reglà, *Els virreis de Catalunya*, p. 142.

In the course of discovering this they had led their people into bloodshed and deprivation and had inflicted a grievous wound on the rest of Spain. The role of the Catalan revolt in Spain's mid-century crisis is difficult to define with precision. England too had a civil war about the same time and came out of it a major military power. A basic factor in Spain's crisis was the depression in the Indies trade from 1629.[39] The collapse of maritime defences, the decay of Spanish shipping, the dwindling of trade with America and the decreasing returns therefrom, all caused a profound crisis in the Spanish Atlantic from which Spain never really recovered in the seventeenth century. Once she had lost her last remaining asset, the wealth from America, she was in serious trouble. The crisis in colonial trade not only hit the crown's revenues directly but also reduced the influx of private capital into Castile and thus damaged all sectors of the economy. This was a permanent shock and would have reduced Spain's power regardless of the revolt of Catalonia. But the depression in the Atlantic sector was one of the reasons why the crown had to look elsewhere—including Catalonia and Portugal—for additional revenue, and this was one of the causes of the alienation of these provinces. At this point the Catalan revolution played a crucial role. It prevented Spain from exploiting France's internal instability, and embroiled her in a disastrous and costly civil war at the very moment when she needed all her diminished reserves of money and manpower for campaigns abroad; these reserves now had to be diverted to Catalonia, thus precipitating Spain's collapse. At the same time the Catalan revolt provided an example and an opportunity to the Portuguese and encouraged them to make their own bid for independence. This in turn worsened the crisis in the Atlantic sector.

3. The Secession of Portugal

Catalonia was a small part of the Spanish imperium, a country orientated towards the Mediterranean and the past. For Spain there was a great security problem in its revolt but not much at stake economically. Portugal was an even greater security risk, for Portugal was more valuable, being an Atlantic power with an overseas empire.

Portugal, like Catalonia, presented a fiscal problem to Castile. It supplied no regular revenue to the central treasury, and its Iberian defences had to be subsidised by Castile, which was also expected to come to the periodic defence of Brazil. Olivares therefore planned to press Portugal too into his Union of Arms, and to the Portuguese, as to the Catalans, he wished to offer improved status and opportunities within the Monarchy.[40] Continuing a

[39] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1793–1851.

[40] Marañón, *op. cit.*, pp. 317–18, 441–42.

policy begun by Lerma, though with hardly more success, he first tried to infiltrate the Portuguese administration; in 1634 Princess Margaret of Savoy was sent to govern the country, with a group of Castilian advisers who caused great resentment among the Portuguese bureaucracy. He then attempted to tax Portugal by introducing a regular contribution of 500,000 cruzados a year towards its own defence. In the period 1619–30 Lisbon had already made extraordinary contributions of one kind or another, some of them voluntary offerings, most of them forced loans, to the amount of 1 million cruzados.[41] New demands only increased the irritation of the Portuguese merchant class. They also led to tax riots in 1637 in Evora and other towns; but as these were essentially lower-class convulsions, from which the Portuguese leaders held aloof, they were put down without difficulty. Class divisions within Portugal gave the Spanish government a certain source of strength. While the lower sectors of society, and the lower clergy, traditionally resented Spanish rule, the aristocracy were reconciled to it by the greater opportunities available to them in a larger empire. By 1640, however, the Portuguese aristocracy too were alienated. The cause of their resistance was overtly the issue of military service. For in addition to money Olivares wanted troops from Portugal. Some 6,000 troops were impressed for service in Italy, but the revolt of Catalonia caused them to be diverted to the army recruited for the Catalan front. Olivares was even more anxious to mobilise the Portuguese nobility, with the duke of Braganza at their head, in order that they should be employed in putting down revolution in Catalonia instead of fomenting revolution at home. But the Portuguese nobility, sensing that the time for action had arrived, refused to be lured out of the country; and in the autumn of 1640 some of them began to plan revolution.

Summons to military service was the occasion rather than the cause of Portuguese resistance. In a country which still remembered past independence there was bound to be latent resentment at the loss of sovereignty involved in the union of the crowns. But why did the Portuguese nobility, hitherto supporters of the union, withdraw allegiance in 1640? Olivares's attempt to press Portugal into the Union of Arms was too diffident to provoke a revolution. The revolt of Catalonia gave the Portuguese a model and an opportunity rather than a motive. The real cause of Portuguese alienation must be sought elsewhere, in an area of opportunity which the Portuguese particularly valued and in which they had a vital stake, the Iberian overseas empire. Olivares argued that as Castile helped Portugal in her attempts to recover Brazil then Portugal should help Castile to recover Catalonia. But what was Castile's record in Brazil? If the Portuguese ruling class ceased to find any advantage in union with Spain, was it because the transatlantic interests

[41] Mauro, *Le Portugal et l'Atlantique*, pp. 468–69.

which bound Portugal to Spain in 1621 were no longer effective in 1640?

Portugal's loss of her Asian empire was not a valid test of Iberian collaboration. A trading empire in which Portugal had virtually no commodities to trade was not viable economically; and the Portuguese did not seriously regard Spain as responsible for its defence.[42] In any case loss of the spice trade was more than counterbalanced by the growth of a second Portuguese empire in Brazil. Brazilian sugar became one of the most spectacular growth industries of the early seventeenth century. By 1627–28 there were 200 sugar-mills in Brazil, most of them in the north-east; and an average of 300 sugar-ships left the colony every year, carrying between 70,000 and 80,000 chests of sugar, worth some 4 million cruzados when landed in Portuguese ports.[43] Although this trade had been penetrated by the Dutch, it represented a major investment for Portugal and it yielded valuable returns. Its defence was therefore a vital test of the Iberian partnership. The most serious threat came from the Dutch West India Company, whose ships intercepted large numbers of Portuguese merchant vessels in the South Atlantic and appropriated their rich cargoes. Suggestions were frequently made that a convoy system on the lines of that operated by Spain's transatlantic shipping would provide the best defence against Dutch attacks; and in 1628 Philip IV instructed the Council of Portugal to investigate the possibility.[44] But the idea foundered on the established organisation of the Brazil trade, which was not canalised through monopoly ports, and on the opposition of the sugar producers, merchants and shippers, who were either unable or unwilling to invest the capital needed for the provision of bigger and better armed escorts. Spain, therefore, could hardly be held responsible for the state of Portugal's maritime defences.

The Dutch not only attacked the sugar trade at sea, they also sought to appropriate it at its source. Their first conquest in Brazil drew swift retaliation; and Spain made a large contribution to the relief expedition which recaptured Bahia in 1625.[45] But in 1630 the Dutch West India Company, investing its windfall from the capture of the Mexican silver fleet in 1628, dispatched a second expedition which occupied Olinda and Recife. Within a few years the Dutch had laid the framework of a new colony in north-east Brazil based on the rich province of Pernambuco; there they remained for a quarter of a century and came to appropriate almost half of the sugar trade. Unless the Iberian powers could send a relief expedition and a fleet capable of contesting Dutch sea power in the South Atlantic, there was a distinct possibility that the enemy would conquer the whole of the Brazilian littoral and begin to penetrate Spanish America.

[42] See above, pp. 59–66.
[43] Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, pp. 178–81.
[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 182–84.
[45] See above, pp. 78–80.

Olivares appreciated that the union of the crowns was on trial. The restitution of Pernambuco became an indispensable Spanish condition for any peace with the Dutch, badly though Spain needed peace. By 1635 Olivares was even prepared to offer the Dutch Breda, 200,000 ducats, and the right to close the Scheldt, if they would return Pernambuco. But the Portuguese wanted more than diplomacy: they wanted military and naval assistance. This too the Spaniards were willing to provide, but they could not provide it quickly. It took over six years to organise a relief expedition, and it was September 1638 before a joint force sailed from Lisbon. Don Fadrique de Toledo, the victor of 1625, declined its command on the gound that it was under strength; the expedition's 41 vessels and 5,000 troops did in fact compare unfavourably with the force dispatched in 1625, a further sign of deterioration in Spain's resources, but reinforcements from Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro brought its strength up to 86 sail and 10,000 troops and gave it a clear numerical superiority over the Dutch. In the event the expedition failed not because of the insufficiency of the force but because of the incapacity of its commander, the Portuguese conde da Torre, who was unearthed only after a fruitless search for talent and proved to be totally unqualified for the task. He kept his armada immobile in Bahia for almost the whole of 1639, thus presenting the Dutch with a perfect opportunity to prepare for battle. He finally moved his fleet to Pernambuco; there, in January 1640, he was outfought by a Dutch fleet under half his strength, and after a few days fighting he weakly withdrew, leaving the greater part of his fleet to disperse to the West Indies.[46]

By 1639, therefore, the Iberian partnership had ceased to function effectively. Although the Portuguese themselves conspicuously neglected their imperial defences, Spain as the senior partner had to bear the odium of failure. If Spain failed Portugal it was not through infirmity of will but through poverty of resources. In the Portuguese view Spain was overcommitted elsewhere to the neglect of more vital interests. There had ceased to be any value in the union. Spain could bring to it in the 1630's much less power than in the past. And the Portuguese resented their losses in Brazil from 1630 much more than they had resented their losses in Asia from 1600.[47] Their resentment was aggravated by the fact that they were also in the process of losing one of the greatest advantages accruing from Brazil, their foothold in Spanish America.

At the height of the Brazil trade between 200 and 300 vessels left Portugal annually to cross the South Atlantic; these included many vessels from northern Europe, without counting those which sailed directly from Amsterdam.[48]

[46] Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, pp. 116–20. [47] Chaunu, 'Autour de 1640', *Annales*, ix (1954), 44–54.
[48] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1328–29, 1833–34.

As Portugal was not a manufacturing country it was obvious that these vessels were exporting merchandise from outside Iberian sources, and on a scale which far exceeded the capacity of the Brazilian market. They were in fact exporting to Spanish America, circumventing the legal route via Panama and Peru, and competing on very favourable terms—these goods were untouched by Spanish taxes—with authorised Spanish exports. Brazil, therefore, became an entrepôt for a vast re-export trade which possibly took half of the Spanish South American market.[49]

The most important point of Portuguese penetration of Spanish America from about 1600 was the Río de la Plata. Merchants from Brazil, the *Peruleiros*, made their way across the pampas, through Tucumán and over the Andes into Upper Peru, where they sold their goods for the coveted silver of Potosí.[50] Across the same route there was a flourishing contraband trade in slaves from Angola, the supply of which the Portuguese virtually monopolised. In addition to trading illegally in Spanish America the Portuguese also settled there, with tacit if not formal permission. Some acquired land, like Salvador de Sá, who married a wealthy creole heiress in Tucumán and thus became the owner of estates strategically placed on the route to Potosí.[51] Others sought and obtained offices. In Peru the Portuguese were prominent in maritime occupations as pilots and owners of vessels; some settled in towns and ports as resident traders, acquiring among other things a virtual monopoly of the export of vicuña wool; others became small landed proprietors.[52] They were also to be found in Mexico, where most of them had improved their prospects as small independent farmers and traders or as wage employees; in the province of Tulancingo, for example, they constituted from 10 to 15 per cent. of the adult male Europeans.[53] This Portuguese invasion of the Spanish Indies was one of their most valuable assets under the union of the crowns. In this sector, at least, Olivares's offer of opportunities was temporarily vindicated; it was not the Castilians who penetrated the Portuguese empire, but the Portuguese who penetrated the empire of Castile.

Inevitably there was a reaction. From about 1630 Spaniards began to resist the Portuguese invasion of their empire. Merchants and colonists, Mexicans

[49] Chaunu, 'Autour de 1640', *op. cit.*, p. 53; Canabrava, *O comércio português no Rio da Prata, 1580–1640*, pp. 20–28. Spaniards alleged that 14–18 vessels a year entered Buenos Aires, carrying as much cloth as the *flota* took to Tierra Firme; officials were presumably being bribed into compliance.
[50] Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, pp. 77–79; Canabrava, *op. cit.*, pp. 96–131; Georges Scelle, *La traite négrière aux Indes de Castille* (2 vols., Paris, 1906), i, 382–484.
[51] Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, pp. 96–110.
[52] María Encarnación Rodríguez Vicente, *El Tribunal del Consulado de Lima en la primera mitad del siglo XVII* (Madrid, 1960), pp. 70–73, 173, 264–65, 268–69.
[53] Woodrow Borah, 'The Portuguese of Tulancingo and the Special *Donativo* of 1642–1643', *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, iv (1967), 386–98.

and Peruvians inundated the imperial government with protests against the ubiquitous Portuguese, intruders who took the fruit from the mouths of Spaniards. According to one memorial, 'the Portuguese are increasing in the Spanish Indies, and go on every fleet, while they are careful to keep the Castilians out of the East Indies'; another claimed that Portuguese Jews controlled the trade of Lima 'from the vilest African Negro to the most precious pearl'.[54] Many, though not all, of the Portuguese who traded with and settled in Spanish America were indeed New Christians, and therefore suspect as judaisers as well as interlopers. From 1634 the Lima Inquisition intensified proceedings against them and increased its confiscation of their property.[55] The state too began to tighten the screw, taxing the Portuguese and their property with growing severity.

The Portuguese now had an added resentment. At the very moment when they looked to the Spanish empire to compensate for losses in their own, Spaniards reasserted their traditional exclusivism in the Indies. They were moved not merely by national and religious emotions but also by a distinct awareness that the Spanish Indies were themselves contracting economically, particularly from 1629, when the trend of prices and of trade went into reverse and when a period of easy profits gave way to one of acute difficulty. Between the 1580's and the 1620's, during its last phase of expansion, the Spanish empire had easily absorbed Portuguese immigrants; but now that there was less cake to share the guests were unwelcome.[56] Harassment of the Portuguese mounted throughout the 1630's and when, early in 1641, news of the revolt of Portugal reached Spanish America colonial officials were already poised to punish the immigrants by fiscal discrimination, property confiscation, and in some cases expulsion.[57]

By 1640 the Portuguese had reasons, convincing to themselves if not to Spaniards, to reject the union with Spain. They also had the opportunity. Naval losses in the battle of the Downs (October 1639) and at Pernambuco (January 1640) had stripped Spain's Atlantic defences and deprived her of a naval arm against Lisbon; now the revolt of Catalonia pinned down the remnants of her military forces. Richelieu had already promised the Portuguese French assistance in the event of a revolt, and they hoped that the Dutch would ease the pressure on their colonial territory if they declared their independence of Spain. The Portuguese had another asset in the person of Dom John, 7th duke of Braganza, who, weak and vacillating though he was, could claim dynastic rights to the Portuguese throne and was a symbol of

[54] Quoted in Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, pp. 77–81.
[55] Rodríguez Vicente, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
[56] Chaunu, 'Autour de 1640', *op. cit.*, p. 54.
[57] Borah, 'The Portuguese of Tulancingo', *op. cit.*, p. 394.

national unity. He had been pressed for some time by a group of influential nobility to proclaim himself king, and when Olivares attempted to lure the nobility out of the country both he and his supporters were forced to commit themselves. They did so on 1 December 1640 when the duke of Braganza was proclaimed king John IV of Portugal in Lisbon.[58] Although there was some attachment to Spain among elements of the nobility, higher clergy and merchants, there was no real opposition to independence, and it was received with positive enthusiasm by the mass of the people. It also had the influential support of the Portuguese Jesuits, who played an important role in the movement and perhaps a decisive one in rallying Brazil to the cause in the early months of 1641.[59]

As long as the Catalan front absorbed Spain's energies within the peninsula she had no chance of recovering Portugal. For the moment therefore she had to remain on the defensive against the Portuguese until she were free to reduce them. Equally the Portuguese were not in a position to wage offensive war on Spain, even had John IV so wished. They had to give priority to the defence of Brazil, for it was the sugar trade which chiefly financed their independence and their armed forces. The major threat to their colonial life-line came from the Dutch, not from Spain. The Dutch concluded a ten-year truce with Portugal in June 1641, but far from helping her against the common enemy they exploited her difficulties. In August 1641 they occupied Luanda, the base of the Angola slave trade, thus threatening to starve Portuguese Brazil of its plantation labour.[60] Dependent now on their own initiative, the Portuguese began to fight back. In 1648 they reconquered Luanda; in 1654 they recovered Recife and expelled the Dutch from Brazil. Now they were free to focus on Spain. With the death of John IV (6 November 1656) and the regency of his widow, Doña Luisa de Guzmán, they adopted a more belligerent policy, if only to show France their value as allies and to dissuade her from making a separate peace with Spain.[61] While Spanish sea power was tied down in war with Cromwell's England, the Portuguese invaded Spain in 1657 and seriously threatened Badajoz; in January 1659 they themselves were invaded but inflicted a shattering defeat on the Spanish

[58] On the Portuguese independence movement see Peres, ed. *História de Portugal*, v–vi; Virginia Rau, *D. Catalina de Bragança* (Lisbon, 1941).
[59] Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, pp. 142–47. Although in South America the Spanish crown had been an ally of the Jesuits in their conflict with the Paulista slave-hunters, in the Far East it had followed a policy more sympathetic to the missionary methods of the Dominicans than to those of the Jesuits; see Chaunu, 'Autour de 1640', *op. cit.*, p. 55.
[60] Boxer, *Salvador de Sá*, pp. 168–70, 248–92.
[61] On Portuguese diplomacy in this period see Eduardo Brazão, *A restauracão. Relações diplomáticos de Portugal de 1640 a 1688* (Lisbon, 1939); on Luso–French relations see Edgar Prestage, *The Diplomatic Relations of Portugal with France, England and Holland from 1640 to 1668* (Watford, 1925), pp. 1–98.

army at Elvas. France deserted Portugal at the Peace of the Pyrenees in 1659 and hardly compensated by allowing the dispatch of volunteers under count Schomberg. It was the English alliance of 1661 which rescued Portugal from her diplomatic isolation; she now secured the support of English sea power and the assistance of an English military contingent.

For Spain the war was a story of unrelieved disaster. After forty years of warfare the Spanish people had not the stomach for more; they could produce neither enthusiasm, nor an army, nor suitable officers. Philip IV had to rely on German and Italian *tercios*. Even with these Don John of Austria, the victor of Catalonia, was unable to make an impression on the Portuguese, and he was defeated by Schomberg at the battle of Ameixial in June 1663. Another army was laboriously assembled under the command of a veteran soldier, the marquis of Caracena; this too was defeated, at Vila Viçosa on 17 June 1665, a few months before the death of Philip IV. By now the war had become his war alone; with his rigidly dynastic view of sovereignty he had stubbornly clung to the belief that the Portuguese were rebel subjects, to be reduced at all costs. The government which succeeded him had neither the will nor the resources to continue. On 13 February 1668 Philip's widow, the regent Mariana of Austria, recognised the independence of Portugal.

4. After Olivares

The revolts of Catalonia and Portugal reduced the count duke's policy to dust. Olivares was a victim of economic circumstances as well as of political illusions. Between 1638 and 1641 the vital transatlantic trade suffered an emphatic collapse; if there was an ultimate turning point in Spain's economic power this was it.[62] State revenue and credit inevitably suffered. In 1640 no treasure arrived from the Indies. In 1641 the Tierra Firme fleet brought the crown only half a million ducats, to be followed by an equally meagre consignment in the New Spain fleet.[63] In each instance the crown confiscated half the private returns and compensated the merchants with vellon. The policy was self-defeating. Sequestration of private silver, combined with the rising costs of convoy defence, encouraged yet greater recourse to fraud, aggravated the crisis in the Indies trade, and thus reduced the pickings available to the crown. From 1640 state finances were in chaos; the public had been taxed dry; and there were two new fronts to be supplied.[64] Vellon issues were recklessly increased but these so drove up the premium on silver

[62] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1797–1848.
[63] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *op. cit.*, pp. 358–60.
[64] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 62–64.

that advances from the bankers became impossibly expensive. In September 1642, therefore, the government was forced to deflate by 25 per cent.; this constituted in effect an unscrupulous form of taxation and was a further blow to private savings.[65]

These sacrifices might have been tolerable had they produced proportionate results. But the campaigns in Catalonia and Portugal revealed crass incompetence in the administration and inability to plan for predictable events. Although Olivares had always regarded war as an essential instrument of policy, he had done nothing to give Spain a military machine adequate to its needs. The professional troops were already deployed in Italy, Germany and the Low Countries. But there was virtually no organisation for raising a national army in Castile. Recruits unfortunate enough to be pressed into service resembled nothing so much as a feudal host, untrained, inexperienced, and led by amateurs. As Spain came apart at the seams, Olivares worked feverishly to repair the damage, but his time was running out. In September 1642 Perpignan was lost to France. The royal army so frequently announced and so laboriously assembled, the army on which Olivares pinned all his hopes, now moved unsteadily from Aragon towards Lérida, the key to Catalonia. There it was firmly defeated and lost 5,000 men.[66] In retreat as in attack disorder was complete, and pitiful survivors reaching Zaragoza, to find neither food nor lodgings nor medicine, were visible victims of gross failure of leadership.

Failure made Olivares vulnerable. He had long been hated by the Castilian aristocracy, who resented his monopoly of power and patronage. Some, like the duke of Híjar and the duke of Sessa, welcomed his difficulties in Catalonia and sought to exploit them. Others went further. In 1641 the duke of Medina Sidonia, a cousin of Olivares and brother of the new queen of Portugal, headed a conspiratorial movement to oust Olivares and make Andalucía an independent kingdom. The opposition of most of the nobility, however, took less eccentric forms. First they ostracised Olivares, staging in the last years of his rule a veritable *huelga de grandes* in which they abandoned court and king.[67] Then, in 1642, while Olivares was absent in Aragon, they focused their opposition more precisely and seem to have brought pressure on the king. The movement was organised by the count of Castrillo, a member of the Haro family, who was inspired as much by personal as by political motives. For Olivares had alienated the Haros, who were closely related to him, by legitimising a bastard son, Enrique Felípez de Guzmán, and giving him right of succession to his titles and estates.[68]

[65] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, p. 86.
[66] Sanabre, *op. cit.*, pp. 211–12.
[67] On the 'strike of the grandees' see Marañón, *op. cit.*, pp. 89–100. [68] *Ibid.*, pp. 285–301.

Olivares appreciated that his political career could not survive the disasters of 1640–42 and he was ready to go. Philip IV arranged his resignation honourably and without recrimination; on 17 January 1643 he gave him formal permission to retire on the grounds of ill-health. The count duke left Madrid for his house at Loeches, fought a brief propaganda campaign in defence of his reputation, and was then exiled to his sister's house at Toro. There, deranged in mind and broken in body, he died on 22 July 1645.

Superficially the new regime repudiated the rule of Olivares and all its manifestations. Yet it had the same problems, the same enemies, and basically the same system of government. For Olivares was succeeded in the *valimiento* by his nephew, Luis de Haro, a discreet and modest man, then aged forty-four, whose rise to power was less flamboyant than that of Olivares but just as inexorable.[69] On the departure of the count duke Philip IV professed to be shocked by what he discovered of the state of his kingdoms; and he resolved that he must never again abdicate responsibility. In July 1643, on his way to the Aragon front, he met the celebrated mystic, Sor María de Agreda, with whom he corresponded for the next twenty-two years. Sor María was a highly politicised religious and from her convent she directed a flood of advice to the king on the affairs of the Monarchy. She assured him that royal decisions were good, ministerial decisions usually bad; she inveighed against Olivares and denounced *validos*. Her nagging pen, naive though it was, further stirred Philip's conscience, and he decided to work more and delegate less, 'seated in this chair, with papers before me and pen in hand, working on all the consultas sent to me and the despatches from abroad'.[70] He seemed determined not to appoint another *valido*. In the decree which announced the retirement of Olivares he stated: 'The moment is opportune to inform the Council that such a good minister must be replaced only by me myself, since our present difficulties require all my personal attention for their remedy'.[71]

Philip's resolution lasted only a few months. He had been a friend of Haro since childhood and he admired his qualities. Soon he was not only taking his advice but accepting his decisions. By mid-1643 Haro was recognised by observers as undoubtedly the successor of Olivares. Philip was too ashamed and Haro too discreet to acknowledge the fact, and they avoided the terms *valido* and minister. The king guiltily reassured the disapproving Sor María: 'I have always refused to give him the character of minister, in order to

[69] For a character sketch of Haro see Deleito y Piñuela, *El declinar de la monarquía española*, pp. 150–59.

[70] Philip IV to Sor María de Agreda, 30 January 1647, in Valiente, *Los validos en la monarquía española del siglo XVII*, p. 183.

[71] 'Comunicación del Rey al Consejo de la Cámara', 24 January 1643, in Marañón, *op. cit.*, p. 464.

avoid previous mistakes'.[72] Nevertheless by 1647 Haro had acquired almost as many functions as Olivares. He was assisted by a *junta de estado*, which met in his own house as his uncle's had done. Although he was not a member of the Council of State he directed its affairs from outside; and he controlled state papers and their distribution between councils in much the same way as previous *validos*. In general he had the same power as Olivares, though perhaps there was a new division of labour between king and *valido*, with the king attending to more business than he had previously done. Haro had no official titles and did not even use the personal ones he inherited from his uncle. But by the late 1650's Philip was referring to him in state papers as his *primer ministro*; in the Treaty of the Pyrenees he spoke of him as his *primer y principal ministro*.[73] Although the title was a general and occasional one, Haro was in fact first minister and remained such until his death in 1661. Philip IV did not replace him. In the last five years of his reign, either because he found no one to trust or because the call of duty now appealed more than the pleasures of the flesh, he retained personal direction of government, taking advice from many, giving power to none.

If the new regime brought few governmental innovations, it did little to re-orientate Spain's foreign policy. The replacement of Olivares could not work miracles. The war continued to devour men and money, and Castile still bore the brunt. Subsidies from the cortes, forced loans, sale of offices, manipulation of the currency, all the devices favoured by the old regime were also practised by the new. The only difference was that where Olivares ranted Haro reasoned. As long as the demands of war were paramount, however, reason had its limits; there was no opportunity to stop and reorganise public finances. By the beginning of 1644 the crown's income was pledged up to 1648. *Asientos* contracted for 1644 amounted to 5·3 million escudos—over 2 million for the Low Countries, the remainder for Germany, Italy and internal administration. But a further 3 million was needed for the armies on the Catalan and Portuguese fronts and for the royal household. It was therefore decided to sell in the form of *juros* the recent 1 per cent. increase in the *alcabala* tax. Corregidores were instructed to seek the consent of the towns represented in the cortes but not to assemble the *cabildos* until they were sure of getting a favourable vote; if the *cabildos* were not persuaded by the state of the treasury then they were to be told that the king ordered the measure by virtue of his rights under divine and human law.[74] Spanish constitutionalism was as defunct as ever.

The situation in 1645–46 was more or less the same and Haro continued to raise extraordinary revenue by executive measures. The estimate of pro-

[72] See note 70.

[73] Valiente, *op. cit.*, pp. 20, 185–86.

[74] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 64–68.

jected expenditure in 1647 was 12·7 million ducats, while available revenue was 7 million short of this. All essential foodstuffs were already overtaxed; forced loans were bringing diminishing returns; and it was not known when the Indies fleets would arrive. Before 1646 was out the Spaniards at great cost forced France to raise the siege of Lérida, but in the Low Countries they lost Dunkirk, and in 1647 there was a revolution in Naples. Available revenue for the next four years was already assigned to bankers and there was nothing with which to make immediate *asientos*. So the crown had to declare the second bankruptcy of the reign, twenty years after the first. By suspending payments and freeing pledged income the crown at once procured some 10 million ducats. The *asentistas*, who were indemnified with *juros*, suffered great losses, particularly the Portuguese and the Genoese; but the four royal factors—Spinola, Imbrea, Centurión and Palavesia—were exempt in order not to deprive them of the means of making further *asientos*.

5. War and Peace

The political and financial disasters of the 1640's, not the fall of Olivares, forced Spain eventually to re-think her foreign policy and reduce her commitments abroad. There was no thought of retreat from basic objectives, and Philip IV was determined that his subjects should fight on until these were achieved. But there was a readjustment of priorities and a renewed search for peace. First the Spaniards accepted what they had long suspected, that the Habsburg alliance was obsolete. As the Thirty Years War dragged on the rift between Madrid and Vienna became wider. By the early 1640's they no longer had the same war aims. For Spain the principal danger came from France and the United Provinces; for the emperor the main enemy was Sweden. Spain resented her precious subsidies being absorbed by the Swedish war and from 1640 she drastically reduced them. She also resented the emperor's failure to support her position in the Palatinate and his readiness to sacrifice her interests there to conciliate France and Sweden, as he did in 1648.

The Habsburg alliance had been expensive to Spain and had brought her few returns. She could now concentrate what resources she had on the French and Dutch fronts. Unfortunately, owing to the collapse of the Spanish–American trade from 1638, the Spanish forces in the Low Countries could no longer count on the treasure of the Indies.[75] In 1643 the army under Francisco de Melo, Portuguese governor of the Spanish Netherlands, went into action against the French without adequate cavalry, because horses were too expensive. On 19 May at Rocroi it was defeated and routed by the young French commander, the duke of Enghien, and suffered 14,000 casualties

[75] Chaunu, 'Seville et la "Belgique" (1555–1648)', *op. cit.*, p. 277.

in dead and wounded; although the mercenaries turned and fled, the Spanish veterans fought to the death. Rocroi has acquired a legendary reputation as the greatest defeat ever suffered by the incomparable Spanish infantry, and it is often taken to mark the end of Spain's military power. But one battle in a war which had already lasted twenty-five years and still had another fifteen to run could not have transcendental significance. There was still plenty of fight left in Spain. Her military effort in the Low Countries did not slacken and although she suffered further reverses, including the loss of Dunkirk, she managed to maintain her position in the southern Netherlands. There, in spite of the bankruptcies, mutinies and failures, Spain had a record of financial and military organisation second to none in Europe. The massive revenue injections, the military supply routes, the machinery for army welfare and maintenance, all developed and sustained over seventy years were a great feat of military organisation which constituted a kind of victory. Overseas the Dutch still found Spanish colonial defences impenetrable, and their expedition to Chile in 1642 was a conspicuous failure.

But the Spanish government was reluctantly forced to conclude that it could not fight the United Provinces and France simultaneously. In July 1644 Philip IV issued a decree informing his ministers that owing to lack of resources he wished peace to be concluded on all fronts as soon as possible. But Spain's enemies knew this and exploited her weakness. France in particular was a difficult enemy to deal with and likely to be even more difficult if, as now seemed possible, she made peace with the emperor and concentrated her attack on Spain. So Spain anticipated the Peace of Westphalia, which brought the Thirty Years War to a close, by making a separate peace with the Dutch in January 1648. It was a logical step to take. The greatest threat to her peninsular security came from France; and Mazarin's demands, including a proposal to send auxiliaries to the Portuguese rebels across Spanish territory, were plainly intolerable.[76] By January 1648 the Spanish government had reached agreement with the Dutch on the general terms of a peace treaty, and these formed the basis of the Treaty of Munster of 24 October 1648. Spain recognised the United Provinces as a sovereign, independent state; she procured neither the opening of the Scheldt nor official toleration for Roman Catholics, two of her more important peace aims; and she explicitly recognised the right of the Dutch to conquer all the Portuguese colonial territory to which they laid claim, although in Spanish eyes the Portuguese were still subjects of Philip IV.[77] Spain retained the

[76] On peace with the Dutch see Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road*, p. 261. On Spanish policy at Westphalia see Fraga Iribarne, *Don Diego de Saavedra y Fajardo y la diplomacia de su época*, pp. 564–91.

[77] Boxer, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire*, p. 27.

southern Netherlands, and detached the Dutch from the French alliance. It seemed a meagre result from a war of eighty years.

The recognition of Dutch independence, though galling to Spain, was merely a recognition of long-standing facts. It was designed to isolate France at a time when that country was also weakened by domestic instability. In the event Spain was unable to exploit the anti-Mazarin Fronde, as she did not have the resources for a major effort. But at least she recovered Dunkirk and began the recovery of Catalonia. The war called for further sacrifices from Castile. The crown seized 1 million ducats of private returns from the Indies, anticipated revenue up to 1655, and in November 1651 increased vellon to the level of the pre-1642 deflation.[78] The subsequent price rise was aggravated by poor grain crops; in Andalucía there were serious disturbances, and Seville was at the mercy of the mob for several days. In 1652 the government deflated again, but by now vellon was utterly discredited and monetary disorder could hardly be worse. Estimated expenditure for 1653—11·3 million ducats—was far in excess of the revenue from ordinary taxation, forced loans and sale of offices. So the government decreed yet another suspension of payments. At this point, if Spain had been able to finance a supreme war effort, she could probably have won a favourable peace, before France recovered from political instability and agricultural distress and before she was joined by England. As it was, Spain barely had the resources to maintain her positions on the various fronts. In the cortes of 1655 the speech from the throne stated that it had not been possible to reach a general peace; it enumerated the positions recovered in Italy, the Low Countries and Catalonia; and it pointed out that insurrections in Sicily and Naples had also been overcome. Defence costs from 1649 to 1654 had totalled 66·8 million escudos, and these had been met without imposing new taxes, 'whatever other means his majesty has been forced to use with his prerogative'. In preference to new taxes the king requested 'a universal means which would yield the same yet would fall on those with personal fortunes and not on the poor beggar, the labourer, the artisan and other people who can only support themselves with their labour'. The cortes, of course, was the last institution from which to expect support for such a tax; it simply voted a renewal of previous subsidies, with an additional 2 million ducats in sale of offices, and financial reform was left for another day. Yet the demands of war drove the crown to impose one fiscal innovation which had social significance. In 1657 it imposed a *media anata* tax (a sum equal to half a year's income) on all grants, pensions and annuities bestowed by Philip IV and his predecessors, exempting only those

[78] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *op. cit.*, pp. 366–68, and *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 68–75.

serving in the armed forces, their dependants, and disabled ex-servicemen. This was the kind of tax which the gentry-dominated cortes had always opposed; it was used frequently by Philip IV and his successor, though the nobility exerted their influence to procure exemption, and it yielded progressively lower returns.[79]

While Spain did not have the means for a major offensive, she was still capable of defending herself, and it is a comment on the alleged waning of her military power that she fought France to a stalemate. At this point, however, the military balance was tipped against Spain by the entry of England into the war. The Spanish government had reason to expect a more propitious outcome from its English policy, which was determined by pragmatism not ideology. In the 1640's Philip IV followed a policy of strict neutrality towards the English civil war, and he showed little sympathy for the Stuart cause. He quickly recognised the new republic and, appreciating its threat to the balance of power, was prepared to buy its alliance, or at least neutrality, at almost any price. But Cromwell's price was too high. He wanted an explicit statement of religious toleration towards Englishmen resident in Spain and the admission of English merchants to direct participation in the Spanish colonial trade. These were gratuitous demands: the religious problem had been dealt with in previous treaties and Englishmen had an indirect trade with the Spanish Indies through re-exports from Seville. Indeed the demands were so provocative that they were presumably designed to be rejected. As if to emphasise the point, Cromwell raised them still higher, to include the cession of Calais and Dunkirk.

Cromwell seems to have decided on war with Spain as early as April 1654; from August he was planning a marauding expedition and in December, without declaration of war, this was dispatched with instructions 'to assault the Spaniard in the West Indies'. The operation was ill-planned and badly executed; its commanders failed to overcome Spanish defences at Hispaniola, the principal target, and had to be content with the capture of Jamaica.[80] Meanwhile another English squadron patrolled off Cadiz, waiting to intercept the silver fleets. Philip IV was incredulous. In June 1655 he dismissed warnings from the duke of Medina Sidonia that defence measures were needed: 'It is unbelievable that the English would break public faith and the peace which exists between the two nations; it is therefore unnecessary to

[79] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, p. 74.

[80] On Cromwell's 'Western Design' see I. A. Wright, ed., *Spanish Narratives of the English Attack on Santo Domingo* (*Camden Miscellany*, xiv, London, 1926); J. M. Incháustegui, *La gran expedición inglesa contra las Antilles Mayores. Tomo I: El plan antillano de Cromwell*, 1651–1655 (Mexico, 1953).

take major defensive measures'.[81] He was even ready to overlook—for the time being at least—the conquest of Jamaica if that would facilitate peace with England. But Cromwell did not want peace.

It was Spain's ultimate misfortune, after a long and gruelling war, to be suddenly confronted by a new military power whose foreign policy was dominated by motives of gain and godliness and who seized upon Spain as the most likely target for both. Philip IV was forced into a war with England which he did not seek. In September 1655 an embargo was placed on English property in Spain and in December it was decided to apply the proceeds from its sale to naval defence. The need was urgent, for Spain's maritime communications were now vulnerable to English naval power. In September 1656 a detachment of Blake's squadron intercepted the returning Tierra Firme fleet almost within sight of Cadiz, captured the *capitana* and a merchantman, took booty estimated at 2 million pesos, and sank other valuable units. The New Spain fleet was forewarned and took refuge in Santa Cruz de Tenerife; there, on 30 April 1657, it too was sought out by Blake and almost totally destroyed, with the loss of its cargo and treasure.[82] For two years therefore no silver fleet reached Spain, while her foreign trade was paralysed by the enemy blockade of the peninsula and control of the English channel. Spain was now completely isolated, with two major enemies and not a single ally. Yet in 1656 there was a distinct opportunity of peace with France; Catalonia had now been recovered and the French promised not to assist the Portuguese. Against the advice of his ministers Philip IV refused to negotiate, insisting on conditions as unreasonable as those which Cromwell demanded of Spain.[83] Spain was severely punished for his folly. In June 1658 a combined French and English army overwhelmed the Spaniards at the battle of the Dunes and took Dunkirk. The Spanish Netherlands, their subsidy already cut from 3 to 1 million escudos a year, were now seriously exposed. And in the peninsula the Portuguese, by their victory at Elvas, added to Spain's retribution.

As the country reeled under these successive blows, Philip IV's ministers urged him to end the agony; Don John of Austria in the Netherlands, the councils in Madrid, Haro, the primate of Spain, all gave the same advice.[84] As for his subjects, from the aristocracy to the poorest peasant, they had long

[81] Quoted in Domínguez Ortiz, 'España ante la Paz de los Pirineos', *Hispania*, xix (1959), 548. In fact the 1655 silver fleet got through safely.

[82] See C. H. Firth, *The Last Years of the Protectorate*, 1656–1658 (2 vols., London, 1909), ii, 260–61, who, however, exaggerates the significance of the disaster; the transatlantic trade had suffered so many reverses in the last two decades that one year's loss could hardly be decisive.

[83] F. J. Routledge, *England and the Treaty of the Pyrenees* (Liverpool, 1953), p. 9.

[84] For the advice of the *junta de estado* see *ibid.*, p. 17.

ceased to believe that the war bore any relation to their interests, and they had lost their military vocation. The final campaigns, even within the peninsula, were fought mainly by Italian conscripts, with Irish and German mercenaries. Want of money to pay for these various armies was reason enough for peace. Mazarin was seeking a solution, and the English government, reluctant further to assist France, was not averse to one. But even now Philip IV was loath to negotiate, and if France had not modified her demands he would have ordered his subjects to fight on. He was eventually moved, not by the sufferings of his people much less by financial distress, but by yet another illusion—that peace with France and England would enable him to isolate and reduce the Portuguese. He therefore agreed to an armistice in May 1659 and the Peace of the Pyrenees was signed on 7 November. The treaty provided for the marriage of Philip IV's daughter, María Teresa, to the king of France. Spain ceded to France territory in the Netherlands and, more significantly, Cerdagne and Roussillon in Catalonia. Further cessions, among them Artois, marked the end of Spanish control over the imperial route from Milan to the Netherlands.[85] In its territorial provisions, however, the treaty was not a disaster for Spain. Its principal defect was that it came years too late.

Experience taught Philip IV no lessons, and the political philosophy which informed his decisions remained unaffected by the events of 1640–59. He had no conception of a national monarchy transcending dynastic interests. Although he professed a love of his subjects and a desire to alleviate their miseries, he saw himself primarily as the representative of the Habsburg dynasty, charged with the preservation of its possessions. These he regarded essentially as an estate entailed in perpetuity, and he shrank from the responsibility of alienating or losing any part of his sacred inheritance. It never occurred to him to ask whether the continued possession of the Netherlands or Portugal was of any benefit to his Spanish subjects. His only criterion was his legal rights. This accounts for his almost total subordination of domestic to foreign policy and for his stubborn commitment to war in defence of Habsburg property. In 1648 he reluctantly abandoned the war with the Dutch in order to concentrate on that with France. Six years later, still at war with France, he acquired a second enemy, England. Now, in 1659, he ended Spain's forty years war simply to fight another one, against Portugal. Again he miscalculated, for the Portuguese quickly escaped from their isolation and secured an alliance with England which enabled them successfully to defend their independence. The Portuguese war dealt the death blow to

[85] *Ibid.*, pp. 67–70, 81; see also Juan Reglà, 'El tratado de los Pirineos de 1659', *Hispania*, xiii (1953), 101–66.

the crown's tottering finances. The campaign cost an estimated 5 million ducats a year. From 1660 to 1665, in a final orgy of taxation, the government wildly employed every unsound device known to Habsburg administration —taxes on *juros*, currency manipulation, increase of the *alcabala*, further taxes on foodstuffs, anticipation of revenue and, in 1662, yet another suspension of payments.[86] By 1664 the crown's total indebtedness amounted to 21·6 million ducats. Philip IV bequeathed to his successor an empty treasury, a discredited currency, and a multitude of new taxes already alienated to financiers. And Portugal remained independent.

Philip IV died on 17 September 1665. The last months of his life were marred by acute melancholia. His subjects too had little cause for rejoicing. The political future looked unpromising, for Philip left, if not a succession problem, at least a problem successor, his son Charles, a child of his old age, who was destined to be the most degenerate of all the Spanish Habsburgs. Spaniards would look in vain for new leadership. Economic prospects were also bleak. Spain had been at war for almost half a century. The people had been taxed and conscripted beyond endurance, the population ravaged by epidemic disease, and the colonial life-line badly frayed. Excessive investment in war did not bring comparable returns. Some assets remained. The Spanish colonial empire was still intact, territorially at least. And Spain's military power, though badly eroded, was not extinct. It had taken the combined efforts of France and England to force her to the peace table in 1659 and neither could have done it alone. But basically Spain had nothing to show for her efforts in northern and central Europe. The Habsburg alliance was dead, imperial communications were meaningless; and if Spain retained the southern Netherlands it was less because of her military presence than because the other powers could not agree on an alternative sovereignty.

Nations can recover from the consequences of war and renew their life. But Spain's prostration was so prolonged that it points to a deeper malaise. War and taxation merely placed additional burdens on a society already carrying a dead-weight of privilege and on an economy already weakened by structural defects.

[86] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 81–85.

CHAPTER VI

SOCIETY AND ECONOMY

1. Population and Pestilence

At the end of the seventeenth century there were fewer people in Spain than there had been at the beginning. By the 1590's the demographic upswing of the sixteenth century had spent itself. The population was then about 8,485,000. In 1717 it was 7·5 million.[1] The rest of Europe too suffered demographic recession, or at least stagnation, in the seventeenth century, but nowhere did reverses begin so early, last so long, or attain such proportions as they did in Spain.[2] How can we explain this catastrophe? War, famine and pestilence were not exclusive to the seventeenth century; birth control, though not unknown, was hardly practised; and the birth-rate was normally high in Spain, in spite of the incidence of celibacy. A deficit of 1½ million, most of it in the first half of the century, could only be the result of an exceptional concurrence of adversities.

The secular demographic trend was not the same in every part of Spain. Most of the non-Castilian regions suffered stagnation rather than loss. In Valencia the expulsion of the moriscos reduced the population from approximately 450,000 to 300,000; by mid-century the vacuum had still not been filled when the province was struck by plague. At the end of the century Valencia probably had between 350,000 and 400,000 inhabitants.[3] Catalonia, like other parts of Spain, suffered from plague and famine; the principality was a battlefield from 1640, losing Rosellón in 1659; and French immigration, which had previously boosted its numbers, was much reduced in the second half of the century. In 1700, therefore, the population of Catalonia was between 400,000 and 450,000, no larger than it had been in 1600.[4] Aragon, where the moriscos were less numerous than in Valencia, recovered more quickly from their expulsion, but poor economic conditions caused a down-

[1] A careful discussion of the sources and methods for the study of Spanish demographic history in this period, and considered estimates, are provided by Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 53–157; see also Felipe Ruiz Martín, 'La población española al comienzo de los tiempos modernos', *Cuadernos de Historia*, 1 (1967), 189–250; and Jordi Nadal, *La población española (siglos xvi a xx)* (3rd ed., Barcelona, 1973), pp. 16, 37–88.

[2] See Karl F. Helleiner, 'The Population of Europe from the Black Death to the Eve of the Vital Revolution', *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, iv (Cambridge, 1967), 1–95.

[3] Lapeyre, *Géographie de l'Espagne morisque*, pp. 30, 203–5; see above, pp. 47–55.

[4] Nadal and Giralt, *La population catalane de 1553 à 1717*, pp. 19–23, 337.

ward demographic trend after 1650. The relative immunity of Navarre and the Basque provinces from the great plagues was counterbalanced by their primitive economy which forced many younger sons to emigrate, and here too the population remained stationary, roughly 350,000 throughout the century. In the 1590's the population of the non-Castilian regions totalled some 1,785,000. A century later it was probably slightly less than this.

The greatest blows were reserved for Castile, and within Castile for its heartland. The periphery provinces—Galicia, Asturias, Andalucía and Murcia—escaped the worst incidence of depopulation. The most vulnerable region was the arid and infertile central plateau, and it was this which bore the brunt of the 1½ million deficit; Old Castile, New Castile, and Extremadura all suffered grievous losses. Disaster was absolute. No doubt there was some shift of population towards less depressed regions and overseas; but most of the missing Castilians died of hunger or disease or in war, and adverse economic conditions retarded their replacement. Disaster was also sudden. It began in the 1590's, and sixty years later the worst was over. At the beginning of this period the population of Castile was about 6,700,000. Between 1591 and 1614 severe epidemics and the expulsion of the moriscos reduced this number by 600,000–700,000, or about one-tenth. In 1630–32 plague and famine caused further heavy losses. From 1640 civil wars combined with the famine and epidemics of 1647–52 reduced the population of Castile to its lowest point, and it was now that Andalucía suffered its worst catastrophe. In 1665 the population of Castile was little more than 5 million, which was also the figure yielded by the censuses at the beginning of the eighteenth century. After the damaging years 1677–83, when disease and climatic adversity again struck Castile, the population tended to level off, with perhaps a slight tendency to rise.[5]

Spaniards were at the mercy of disease and the elements. The basic cause of demographic recession was an abnormally high mortality-rate, and the chief killer was epidemic disease.[6] Small-pox, typhus, dysentery and other malignant diseases all played their part in pushing up the death-rates. But the greatest enemy was plague, principally bubonic plague carried by flea-infested rats. The virulence of disease was enhanced by two conditions endemic in Spanish life. Periodic subsistence crises, the fate of a people who neglected arable farming, caused extreme malnutrition and lowered resistance to infection. And excessive urbanisation, leading to overcrowding, working-class slums and neglect of hygiene, made Spanish towns breeding-grounds of disease.

[5] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, graph facing p. 112.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 67–81; see also Luis Sánchez Granjel, 'Las epidemias de peste en España durante el siglo XVII', *Cuadernos de Historia de la Medicina Española*, iii (Salamanca, 1964), 19–40.

The outbreak of 1596–1602, the first major epidemic of the period, devoured northern and central Spain and Andalucía. From December 1596 it attacked Santander, carried to the port by vessels from the Netherlands. In 1597 the infection travelled to San Sebastian and began to spread inexorably inland. In the course of the next three years it moved over Old and New Castile, striking Bilbao, Aranda de Duero, Burgos, Segovia, Madrid, Valladolid, Toledo, and dozens of smaller towns and villages, until it reached the centre and the south of Spain. The plague came in the wake of poor harvests and food shortages, to communities already enfeebled by poverty and depression. In some towns the impact was catastrophic. Santander suffered 2,500 deaths in a population of 4,000. Valladolid lost about 6,500 of its people, or 18 per cent. in four months, Madrid 3,500, or about 10 per cent., in eight months of 1599 alone. The social distribution of mortality was predictable. The rich and powerful could flee to other parts of Spain or isolate themselves in the security of their country estates; the great majority of the victims were the poor and the undernourished. Altogether about 500,000 people died in the northern plague.[7] Its successor, the great plague of 1647–52, struck chiefly eastern Spain and Andalucía. It first penetrated Valencia—perhaps from Algiers—and killed 30,000 people. From there it spread relentlessly to Andalucía and finally swept through Aragon and Catalonia. Andalucía was devastated. On the coast Málaga alone lost 40,000 people. Seville neglected quarantine measures and was contaminated in 1649; entire streets, whole districts were emptied of their inhabitants, and the city was brought to a standstill. Seville and its rural environs probably lost a quarter of their 600,000 people; the economy suffered a permanent shock.[8] Altogether Spain lost about 500,000 people in this monstrous epidemic. Twenty-five years later, between 1676 and 1685, the country was again visited by lethal disease, and again Valencia and Andalucía were the foci of infection. The poor harvests of 1682–83 caused famine conditions, weakening resistance and prolonging the crisis. This, the final great plague of the seventeenth century, claimed about 250,000 victims, and brought the total epidemic losses for the century to at least 1,250,000.

The spectre of death haunted Spain in the seventeenth century. Compared with disease other adversities were of minor significance, but they mounted in conjunction a further assault on human resources. The expulsion of the moriscos varied in its effects from region to region. The total deficit was in

[7] Bartolomé Bennassar, *Recherches sur les grandes épidémies dans le Nord de l'Espagne à la fin du XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1969), pp. 49–53.

[8] A. Domínguez Ortiz, *Orto y ocaso de Sevilla. Estudio sobre la prosperidad y decadencia de la ciudad en los siglos XVI y XVII* (Sevilla, 1946).

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the order of 275,000.[9] Castile's share of this was relatively small; but Aragon lost 20 per cent. of its population and Valencia 30 per cent. Repopulation of Valencia was slow, incomplete, and chiefly at the expense of other parts of the province, for harsh seigneurial conditions were a deterrent to new colonists. Castilians would be more likely to emigrate to America than to Valencia. How many of them did so is open to speculation. Contemporaries had the impression that shoals of emigrants crossed the Atlantic every year, leaving in their wake an empty Castile. But the impression was misleading. Surviving evidence indicates that 150,000 emigration permits were issued during the entire colonial period; of these the seventeenth century would account for perhaps 40,000, or an average of 400 a year.[10] The figure is manifestly too low: the documentation itself is incomplete, and of its nature it fails to record the large number of illegal emigrants. A mixture of calculation and guess-work produces an estimate of 4,000 to 5,000 emigrants a year, an insignificant number in a population of 7 million.[11] But most of them probably came from Castile, and they were a further drain on the region's resources.

The demographic consequences of war cannot be precisely computed. As a warrior nation Spain obviously suffered heavy casualties: in the first half of the seventeenth century she was engaged in almost continuous warfare. But war was not total; the mass of the people were not in the firing-line, nor were they at first conscripted. Spain had forces fighting in the Low Countries, Germany, Italy, and on the French frontier. These were professional troops, with a hard core of volunteers and large numbers of foreign mercenaries. Her naval forces too consisted of professionals. The balance of naval warfare was moving against Spain, and her seamen, particularly in major defeats like the battle of the Downs (1639), suffered heavy casualties in the course of the century. All these, however, could be regarded as the normal hazards of the regular services. From 1635 the situation changed. War with France forced the government to extend the range of its recruitment, to mobilise nobility, gentry, and their retainers, to call up town militias, to take a quota of conscripts from each community. From 1640 the peninsula itself became a

[9] This is the estimate of Lapeyre; Domínguez Ortiz would raise the figure to 300,000; see above, pp. 47, 50–51.

[10] For discussion of the evidence see Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 86–91, and G. Céspedes del Castillo, 'Las Indias en el siglo XVII', in J. Vicens Vives, ed., *Historia social y económica de España y América* (5 vols., Barcelona, 1957–59), iii, 497; see also *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 157; and below, p. 175.

[11] The estimate is that of Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, p. 90. Another estimate, suggesting 200,000 emigrants for the period 1601–50, approximates to this; see Magnus Mörner, 'La emigración española al Nuevo Mundo antes de 1810. Un informe del estado de la investigación', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, 32 (1975), 43–131.

theatre of war, and Castile's conflict with Catalonia and Portugal assumed the character, if not of total war, at least of war to the death, with large-scale pillage and devastation, killing of prisoners, and heavy conscription. For the Catalan front the government aimed at drafting 12,000 men a year in Castile by quotas from each district. The burden fell most heavily on the poorer classes, for the nobility and the rich paid for a substitute or bought an office which carried exemption from military service. The war with Portugal was fought at first by a series of skirmishes along the lengthy frontier and was largely a holding operation. Even so it exacted a heavy toll and civilian casualties were large; Galicia in particular was subject to constant conscription. After 1659 the attempt to reconquer Portugal was made with small armies composed largely of foreign troops.

The greatest military effort, therefore, was concentrated in the years 1635–59, and it was in this period that war-time mortality rates were highest. But death came by stealth rather than assault. For war bred disease and famine and then perpetuated them. It is probable that more people died from the secondary effects of war, from pestilence and malnutrition, than from the sword and the bullet. The figures are difficult to calculate, but a reasoned estimate places the average casualty rate (including Catalonia) at 20,000 a year, which gives a total of 288,000 for the crucial twenty-four years.[12] The presumption of heavy casualties is reinforced by the abnormally high proportion of widows registered in the census of 1646; in Mérida, Extremadura, for example, widows constituted one-sixth of the population.

The syndrome of plague, famine and war brought demographic catastrophe to Spain. The government was aware of the crisis, if only through the reports of its tax-collectors and recruiting-sergeants. But it did not have reliable statistics; it regarded war as inevitable; and in matters of public health it was a creature of its age. Standards of sanitation were abysmal, medical resources primitive. The state was more interested in the consequences of depopulation than in its causes. It occasionally tinkered with the problem, to no visible effect.[13] Among the reform plans adumbrated at the beginning of Philip IV's reign was the creation of a *junta de población*, perhaps with the intention of creating industries and attracting foreigners; but as it had no funds it soon ceased activity. And in an attempt to boost the birth rate the government exempted from taxation fathers who begat eight or more sons; these prolific Spaniards were derisively known as *hidalgos de bragueta*.

[12] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, p. 95.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 98–99.

2. Aristocracy

The polarisation of Spanish society into two sectors, a privileged minority monopolising land and office, and a mass of peasants and workers, continued with greater momentum in the seventeenth century. The basis of this social division was wealth. It is true that function—originally military function—assigned the nobility its social status and honour, and that this was juridically recognised in the *fuero de hidalguía* which exempted the noble from personal taxes and from the normal process of law. But in the ultimate analysis it was money which bought nobility, and money was the motor of social mobility. Class distinction was recognised and reinforced by legislation. The various sumptuary laws, while they were motivated by economic considerations, also served to underline social differences. One such law prohibited the wearing of silk by artisans, labourers, all who worked with their hands, and their wives; another restricted the use of coaches and sedan chairs. Decrees of this kind simply helped to identify status symbols and to encourage social pretensions. But they were welcome to the poor nobility who resented the pretensions of tradesmen, professional people and other urban groups. For its part the crown preserved the nobility, even against itself. Nobles had to get royal permission to marry, to alienate their patrimony, to mortgage their estates, in short to do anything which might weaken their class. For the crown regarded the nobility, somewhat naively, as a reserve of talent at the service of the country.

The nobility were also favoured by the educational system. They now monopolised the Colegios Mayores, foundations originally created to finance the studies of clever students from poor families. From these they graduated to automatic preferment in church and state. A degree was a qualification for office, and in the course of the sixteenth century the universities had helped to produce a new social class, the *letrados*, a corps of legally trained prelates, councillors, magistrates and statesmen, together with a bureaucratic elite comprising *letrado* dynasties who occupied key posts in Spain and the empire. Preference was given to Castilians of pure blood, to those with family connections, to graduates of Salamanca, Valladolid and Alcalá, and to former lecturers. In the seventeenth century, however, economic depression reversed the academic boom of the sixteenth and worsened the job prospects of graduates. The result was greater exclusivism and still more emphasis on utility. The ideal of a university was not scholarship but office-holding. The Colegios Mayores began to admit the sons of more powerful sectors, not only the aristocracy but also the traditional *letrado* families, who wanted to study virtually nothing but law and wanted to study it cheaply. University chairs became the preserve not of scholars but of passing *letrados* with their

eyes on higher rewards. And while the Colegios Mayores continued to recruit their students from the ranks of privilege, their graduates gained easy preferment in the state. They constituted 58·5 per cent. of the *oidores* in the *Chancillería* of Valladolid in the reign of Philip III, rising to 61·5 per cent. in the reign of Philip IV and to 66·7 per cent. in that of Charles II. On the Council of Castile they rose from 57·9 per cent. to 68·5 per cent., reaching 72·5 per cent. under Charles II.[14] Thus the universities were almost exclusively dedicated to the service of the state. When the economy went into depression in the seventeenth century, state and society alike were affected: the universities suffered from dwindling revenues, families from shortage of funds for education, and graduates from lack of opportunities. At that point the universities had no reserves of independent strength to sustain themselves. Socially university students came from *hidalgo* families rather than from commoners. For the elder sons of the higher nobility there was a special institution, the Colegio Imperial in Madrid, founded by the Jesuits in the reign of Philip IV with the specific purpose of training an elite. The college justified itself with the claim that

> well-ordered states have usually derived their success from the good education of their youth, and although it would be very appropriate to extend such education to the common people it is much more important to give it to the sons of princes and nobles, because they are the principal part of the state and, for good or for evil, they lead the rest; moreover they subsequently control the government and administration of the kingdom.[15]

Higher education in Spain had become a powerful instrument for perpetuating the social and political dominance of the aristocracy.

In the course of its history the Spanish aristocracy bred its own hierarchy and its own distinctions. This was inevitable in a class which, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, had grown to 650,000 in Castile, or about one in ten of the population.[16] The original *nobleza de sangre* were joined in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by masses of *hidalgos*, who bought, earned or proved their noble status. In the face of this invasion the older and wealthier nobility sought to preserve social distinctions by insulating themselves in the ranks of the grandees and *titulos*. This re-grouping of the aristocracy became more pronounced in the course of the seventeenth century, and

[14] Richard L. Kagan, *Students and Society in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore, 1974), p. 93, for these and other original details.

[15] Quoted by Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, p. 289; see also J. S. Diaz, *Historia del Colegio Imperial de Madrid* (Madrid, 1952).

[16] John C. Salyer, 'La política española en la época del mercantilismo', *Anales de Economía*, no. 31 (1952), 319–21. See also Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 189–91.

by the end of the period there was a wide gap between the grandees and *titulos*, who were the real nobility, and the mass of *caballeros* and *hidalgos*, who had little more than a coat-of-arms. The ultimate test was an economic one: some were wealthier than others. As Lope de Vega put it,

> No dudes que el dinero es todo en todo.
> Es príncipe, es hidalgo, es caballero,
> Es alta sangre, es descendiente godo.

At the bottom of the hierarchy swarmed the *hidalgos*, nobles by heredity or recent procurement, but debarred by their poverty or lack of office from further advancement. Their principal habitat was northern Castile and the highlands of Cantabria. Some scraped a living from petty estates, others performed work regarded as vile, and not a few were reduced to beggary. These were the classical targets of the satirists. Further south *hidalgos* who possessed any fortune at all preferred the more illustrious designation of *caballero*. The *caballeros* were nobles of middle rank; they lived in town houses, drew most of their income from their estates, and supplemented this by annuities from investments in *juros* and *censos*. They frequently held *regimientos*—seats in municipal councils—which gave them the opportunity of becoming procurators in the cortes and thus of diverting taxation from the property and interests of their class. But *caballeros*, especially the newly arrived, aspired to higher things. To enhance their status they sometimes bought, if they had not already inherited, seigneurial jurisdiction and thus became *señores de vasallos*, of whom there were 254 in Castile at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Above all they craved to be *caballeros de hábito* and *comendadores*, not because the military orders any longer fulfilled a function but because they conferred unimpeachable honour, proof of racial purity, and test of nobility, while the *encomiendas* yielded a useful income.[17] In the seventeenth century, when pressure for *hábitos* increased, Olivares sold them in their hundreds and the government of Charles II further debased their currency.

Armed with a *señorío*, a *hábito* and perhaps an *encomienda*, the *caballero* strove to enter the ranks of the *títulos*. These were distinguished by their position and their wealth, and in popular estimation they were the real nobility. Again the criterion was wealth, especially in the seventeenth century. Those who had enough money to buy land, jurisdiction and vassals, to live a life of ease and ostentation, to advance substantial sums to the treasury, could expect to rise from the rank of simple *caballero* to that of count or marquis. The growth of the *título* class in turn enhanced the value of the *grandeza*, the most exclusive and class-conscious group of all. This

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 200–1.

constant struggle for preferment, for *caballeros* to become *títulos*, and *títulos* grandees, engendered a kind of social mobility and modified the composition of the nobility. The sixteenth century saw a moderate movement upwards: the original 20 grandees and 35 *títulos* had increased to 99 at the end of Philip II's reign—18 dukes, 38 marquises, and 43 counts. Philip III accelerated the process, creating a further 20 marquises and 25 counts. Philip IV, in a longer—44 years—and more penurious reign, created 67 marquises and 25 counts. Charles II, in a reign of 35 years, sanctioned the creation of as many titles as in the previous two centuries—5 viscounts, 78 counts and 209 marquises.[18]

When, in 1520, Charles V legally defined the *grandeza*, it comprised twenty families, among them the dukes of Medinaceli, Alburquerque, Medina Sidonia, Alba, Frías, and Béjar. The first grandees were a select and powerful group; they possessed specific juridical and diplomatic privileges; and to keep them out of politics the early Habsburgs employed them—and their fortunes—in war and diplomacy rather than in central administration. With the accession of the more pliant Philip III the grandees moved more noticeably towards the court, where they negotiated the best appointments in the Council of State and the viceroyalties. Philip IV added lavishly to their number: preferment was a weapon in the hands of Olivares which he used to reward and attract. In 1640 the crown created ten new grandees, each of them undertaking to lead a military contingent to the Catalan front.[19] The older grandees regarded the newcomers with contempt and their patron with suspicion. Olivares returned the antipathy, turning his opponents into declared enemies. Haro treated the grandees more suavely. And under Charles II they reached the apogee of their power.[20] To satisfy their pride and exclusivism further refinements were introduced with the more elaborate distinction between grandees of the first, second and third class. All of them, however, were extremely wealthy men, owners of the greatest fortunes in the kingdom. That was precisely why they were grandees, and that was the basis of their revival in the seventeenth century.

While the grandees and *títulos* looked out from their lofty position, their humbler colleagues had to work hard at being noble. To acquire or confirm the status they had to prove their lineage, their purity of blood—meaning freedom from Jewish ancestry—and their exemption from taxation. Unless a man was of *notoria hidalguía* his claim to nobility would usually involve lengthy and expensive litigation, for it would be contested by his enemies or by remaining taxpayers. Yet the advantages were thought to justify the

[18] *Ibid.*, pp. 209–22.

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 218–19.

[20] See below, pp. 253–7.

struggle, and in many cases they probably did. The law dealt more leniently with the noble than with the commoner, and he could not be tortured, sentenced to the galleys, or imprisoned for debt. Nobility was also a card of entry to the bureaucracy. The best public offices were virtually monopolised by nobles, and nobles occupied about half of municipal offices. The Council of State was always dominated by the higher nobility. The other councils had a greater proportion of *hidalgos* and *caballeros* but no commoners. And other important offices, such as that of *corregidor* (district officer) were usually in the hands of *caballeros*. Finally nobility conferred exemption from personal taxation; indeed tax exemption was the crucial test of *hidalguía*. Minor nobles, on the margin of their class, watched the municipal tax registers with acute anxiety, for it was these which separated the *pecheros* (commoners or taxpayers) from *hidalgos*. Fiscal privilege was much eroded in the seventeenth century by the increase of indirect taxes—principally the *millones*—and other impositions which the crown developed in order to make the nobility contribute, sometimes heavily.[21] But they strenuously resisted personal taxes such as the *servicio ordinario y extraordinario*, for exemption identified their status and had great symbolic value. They also maintained their exemption from certain municipal taxes, including the *sisa* (excise duty); and some towns had special shops for nobles where they could buy food free of purchase tax. The financial advantages of fiscal privilege were not to be despised; but its prestige value was even greater, for it conferred *honor* and social status, and in pursuit of this many Castilians were prepared to sacrifice all.

Nobility was not synonymous with wealth. But the poor *hidalgo* of northern Castile, the object of so much ridicule then and since, was not typical of the whole of Spain. Elsewhere the nobility did more than make ends meet. The source of a noble's wealth, however, was just as important as its size. Could a noble work? The question was much debated in legal and genealogical literature, and the ideal answer was that he should not. In the event impoverished *hidalgos* had to work, and in northern Spain they were driven to occupations which were strictly speaking incompatible with nobility. Apart from these, a number of *títulos* and *caballeros* were involved in industry and commerce, and this was acceptable as long as they did not manage their own enterprises or run them in their own homes. In the trading ports, especially in Seville and Cadiz, where they had the example of uninhibited foreigners before their eyes, Spaniards saw virtually no incompatibility between nobility and commercial enterprise, as long as this was wholesale, successful, and large-scale.

[21] A. Domínguez Ortiz, 'La desigualdad contributiva en Castilla durante el siglo XVII' *Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español*, xxi–xxii (1951–52), 1222–68.

In practice, however, noble entrepreneurs were a rarity. The income of the nobility came primarily from land, secured by primogeniture and entail, and reinforced by *señoríos*. Whether income from agriculture dropped in the seventeenth century is difficult to determine. The fact that a noble had a large estate, or even extended it, did not mean that he was economically motivated. Land was a social rather than an economic investment. Nobles were not normally improving farmers and it would need exceptionally favourable conditions to persuade them to invest in extension of farmland. Agricultural prices dropped in the period 1605–12, failed to rise faster than non-agricultural in 1612–25, and lagged far behind non-agricultural in 1625–65.[22] If nobles were incapable of improving their income from land, this could explain their renewed anxiety to supplement their resources by grants and offices. Those who failed to do so and continued to live exclusively on rural revenue tended to feel the pinch. Their more successful colleagues varied their sources of income.[23]

Income from land was frequently supplemented by seigneurial revenue. The aristocracy had acquired *señoríos* either by virtue of immemorial possession, or by royal grant, or by purchase.[24] The early Habsburgs sold *senoríos* chiefly from disentailed lands of the military orders, but Philip IV, who sold on a much bigger scale, alienated royal jurisdiction to do so.[25] Seigneurial jurisdiction over towns and villages gave a noble vassals, offices, and frequently rents, the most important of which were the *alcabalas*. The noble's gain, therefore, was the crown's loss. It lost income from important taxes, cognisance of many law suits, and revenue from litigation. *Alcabalas* were often sold simultaneously with *señoríos*, and by the mid-seventeenth century more than 3,000 townships and villages in Castile paid their *alcabala* tax not to the crown but to their lords.[26] Paradoxically, as the Habsburgs alienated jurisdiction so they tried to reclaim it, either by decree or more commonly by litigation. In the 1630's and 1640's the fiscal of the Council of Finance, Juan Bautista Larrea, initiated a number of court actions against nobles whose right to possession of *alcabalas* was questionable. But the campaign was not uniformly

[22] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 260–61; Carmelo Viñas y Mey, *El problema de la tierra en la España de los siglos XVI–XVII* (Madrid, 1941), p. 30.

[23] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 223–28.

[24] Alfonso María Guilarte, *El régimen señorial en el siglo XVI* (Madrid, 1962), pp. 1–12, 173–201, 285–324; Salvador de Moxo, 'Los señoríos. En torno a una problemática para el estudio del régimen señorial', *Hispania*, xxiv (1964), 185–236, 399–430.

[25] Salvador de Moxo, *La incorporación de señoríos en la España del antiguo régimen* (Valladolid, 1959), pp. 13–18.

[26] Salvador de Moxo, 'Los orígenes de la percepción de alcabalas por particulares', *Hispania*, xviii (1958), 307–39; see also the same author's *La alcabala. Sobre sus orígenes, concepto y naturaleza* (Madrid, 1963).

successful, and the most that Philip IV's government accomplished was to oblige some of the wealthier holders to disgorge a lump sum to the treasury by way of composition. It was not until the eighteenth century that the incorporation of *señoríos* was seriously undertaken.

In the course of the seventeenth century general economic depression accentuated the tendency of the nobility to turn to courtly and urban functions; at the same time their educational opportunities improved through their success in usurping the funds of the Colegios Mayores and thus procuring a free university education. They cornered the embassies and the councils; they filled the *corregimientos*, seats in the cortes, desirable benefices in the church; they held most of the crown revenues which were out on lease, and they had heavy investments in *juros* and *censos*. Like the rest of society, of course, they were vulnerable to economic adversity and state policy. Monetary inflation hurt those who lived on fixed incomes. The aristocracy of Aragon and Valencia were hit by the loss of the morisco labour force from 1609. And from the 1620's they were all scrutinised more closely by finance ministers. Philip IV, desperate to expand his revenue, requested more and more benevolences from the nobility and began to demand military service or alternatively purchase of exemption. In October 1632 the duke of Béjar, the duke of Medina Sidonia, and the marquis of Priego were asked to supply 3,000 men each for the royal army, in effect to depopulate their estates. A year later they were asked to raise this to 4,000. Requests of this kind were issued so frequently that in 1638 the duke of Béjar began to object.[27] Many of those who failed to comply were banished from court to their estates, with admonitions to save now and contribute later. This was one of the reasons for the alienation of the nobility, from Philip IV as well as from Olivares, and it required all the tact of Haro to win them back.

The nobles, however, were their own worst enemies. If they were in genuine difficulties in the seventeenth century it was due primarily to personal ineptitude. So inefficiently did they run their estates that without the built-in check of entail they would have begun to sell out. As it was many of them tried to do so. The crown normally refused permission to alienate any part of an estate, but it looked more indulgently on requests to mortgage property, requests which now flooded into the Council of Castile. While they were amateurs in managing their affairs, the nobles were also prisoners of an expensive system. Great nobles had heavy overheads: they had to live in style and maintain a large household; they were expected to be generous almsgivers, supporters of foundations, chantries and hospitals, all of which ate into the income of any self-respecting noble. For one reason or another many

[27] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 228–32.

nobles, including the highest, were heavily in debt, and any emergency—service to the crown, a daughter's dowry—found them in trouble. Even the Constable of Castile, Bernardino de Velasco, lord of vast territories, had to plead financial difficulties in 1635, claiming that on succeeding to his patrimony he had found it 'mortgaged up to 400,000 ducats, and most of this sum spent on service to the crown'. The estate of the Enríquez, Admirals of Castile, was constantly besieged by creditors, encumbered as it was with vast debts and heavy expenditure. By 1640 the duke of Infantado was paying 30,000 ducats a year in mortgage repayments. In the middle of the century the house of Pastrana had debts totalling 400,000 ducats and the Council of Castile had to take over the administration of its revenues.[28]

As commerce and industry did not appeal to the higher aristocracy, they sought the sustenance of royal *mercedes*. These were not normally outright grants of money, but 'expenses' for services rendered, and offices, especially the lucrative viceroyalties in Italy and the Indies. Philip III was ridiculously generous with nobles and courtiers, and they looked back on his reign as a golden age. Olivares attempted to cut back on *mercedes*, but Philip IV was a difficult man to restrain and the aristocratic reaction which followed the count duke's fall unleashed a new flood of pensions and grants. In effect the taxpayers were forced to subsidise an expensive aristocracy. Given the depressed condition of Castile, the lavishing of *mercedes* on nobles while poorer people died of hunger was the most pernicious aspect of the bias towards aristocracy in Spanish society. Yet parasitism of this kind expressed an essential truth about seventeenth-century Spain. The aristocracy were rich in property but poor in revenues, while the crown needed the support of a ruling class. Mutual dependence brought the two together. The crown used the aristocracy to rule Spain, and from the crown the aristocracy received sanction for social hierarchy and seigneurial jurisdiction, while taxation was diverted from lands and properties towards newer forms of wealth, such as *juros* and *censos*.[29]

From various sources, then, the Spanish nobility derived enormous wealth, even though some of them, like the crown itself, had to live on credit. The fact that aristocratic income was used unproductively was bound to have a harmful effect on the Spanish economy. Some of this wealth, no doubt, was invested in pious and charitable works and, in the first half of Philip IV's reign, in service to the state, But most of it was spent in conspicuous consumption and social ostentation, to the neglect of saving and investment and

[28] For these and many other examples, *ibid.*, pp. 232–42.

[29] Charles Jago, 'The "Crisis of the Aristocracy" in Seventeenth-Century Castile', *Past and Present*, 84 (1979), 60–90.

to the detriment of the balance of payments. The aristocratic way of life stemmed from false ideals of honour and reputation which contaminated the whole of society and seriously compromised economic values.

3. *La Gente Comun*

A minister of Philip IV noted that Spaniards 'each in their station and estate desire above all else honour and esteem, and everyone tries to advance himself, as can be seen in the fact that sons rarely follow the occupation of their father; the son of a shoemaker hates that occupation, the son of a merchant wishes to be a gentleman, and so it is with the rest'. Spain had no law defining estates, and legally speaking there was no third estate, simply a mass of people—some 6 million—of varying fortune who were only defined by their exclusion from the aristocratic and ecclesiastical estates. There was nothing to stop a commoner who got rich and lived *noblemente* from wearing silk, using a coach, and in general aping the consumer pattern of the nobility.

There were various avenues open to a man of ambition. In the countryside an industrious and thrifty farmer might acquire an entail, then make his presence felt in the local municipality, and finally begin proceedings for ennoblement. In the towns a commoner could purchase an office and move on from there. Or he could enter the church and rely on his qualifications for preferment. The way ahead was difficult and already crowded with nobility. But those who persevered could succeed. '*No tener oficio ni beneficio* came to be synonymous with personal incapacity'.[30] The social preferences were obvious: the most highly regarded careers were in the bureaucracy and the church. Trade and industry attracted far fewer candidates.

Spanish society was not devoid of entrepreneurial instincts. It had its manufacturers, shipowners, and merchants, especially in the periphery provinces. The transatlantic trade still sustained a number of Spanish businessmen. No doubt their profits were now reduced and increasingly shared by outsiders, but even in the 1640's the great merchants of Seville were capable of assembling loans for the crown. In 1645 a consortium of Seville businessmen provided an *asiento* of 340,000 escudos, one of a number of transactions of this kind.[31] Spanish entrepreneurs, however, were few in number. They did not form a middle class, with the social and economic objectives of a middle class. Indeed they usually aspired to aristocratic status, preferring to invest their profits in a title, a landed estate, a daughter's dowry, or mortgage-type securities. The mania for aristocratic status was also fed by racial prejudice. In the sixteenth century a number of prominent Spanish businessmen

[30] Domínguez Ortiz, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

[31] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 147–54.

were undoubtedly of Jewish extraction. This fostered a bias against the whole entrepreneurial class and caused many of its members, including those with Jewish ancestry, to buy their way out, to procure land and ennoblement, and thus to make their social status impeccable.

Public policy reinforced private prejudice. In Aragon and Valencia urban middle groups were badly hit by the expulsion of the moriscos, for in effect they lost the income from their investment in morisco agriculture.[32] In Castile taxation fell principally on the non-aristocratic sector and inhibited investment in trade and industry, while government support of monopoly practices stifled the spirit of competition. A distinguished *arbitrista*, González de Cellorigo, argued that disproportion in the incidence of taxation was dividing Spanish society into two groups: 'We lack people in the middle who are neither rich nor poor but follow their natural occupation. And the cause of this defect is our inequitable system of taxation'.[33] Cellorigo was no egalitarian. He wanted an equilibrium between the three social groups; for this reason he viewed with dismay the erosion of the middle sector, as some climbed out and others dropped below. Taxation, of course, reflected rather than created the social structure; from the 1630's, moreover, aristocratic immunity was diminished in various ways. Nevertheless the property and interests of nobles remained basically intact, while nothing was done to give tax relief to entrepreneurial activities. Fiscal policy therefore tended to perpetuate social polarisation.

The result could be seen all over Spain. It could be seen in Madrid. Between 1597 and 1617 the capital doubled its population from 65,000 to 130,000. This was an essentially parasitic community, a focus of consumption not of production. It comprised on the one hand nobles, courtiers and bureaucrats, people who lived on rents and offices, and on the other hand a vast service sector, together with labourers, underemployed or unemployed, and hordes of adventurers and beggars. With its stark contrast between luxury and squalor, between the elegant palaces of the aristocracy and the adobe dwellings of the masses, Madrid was a microcosm of Spanish society.[34] Burgos, on the other hand, a thriving business centre in the sixteenth century, suffered economic and demographic collapse. No doubt its trade with northern Europe was dislocated by war from the 1580's. But adverse

[32] Juan Reglà, 'La expulsión de los moriscos y sus consecuencias en la economía valenciana', *Hispania*, xxiii (1963), 200–18.

[33] Quoted by Sureda Carrión, *La hacienda castellana y los economistas del siglo XVII*, p. 168.

[34] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 129–36; Ricardo Martorell *Aportaciones al estudio de la población de Madrid en el siglo XVII* (Madrid, 1930); C. Viñas y Mey, 'Notas sobre la estructura social demográfica del Madrid de los Austrias', *Revista de la Universidad de Madrid*, iv (1955), 461–96.

trading conditions alone could not be responsible for the fall in the population of Burgos from 25,000 in the mid-sixteenth century to 8,000 at the end of the seventeenth.[35] The majority of the town's businessmen simply abandoned their class. While 119 merchants attended the *consulado* (merchant guild) assembly in 1535, in 1661 the number was reduced to 8 and these were a majority of the guild's members.[36]

The role of entrepreneur, abandoned by Spaniards, was taken over by foreigners.[37] Since the sixteenth century the principal bankers of the crown had been foreigners. By the 1620's Italians, mainly Genoese, dominated the *asiento* business. The Fuggers were now past their peak, but they still possessed two assets, the lease of the *cruzada*, one of the most lucrative revenues in Spain, and the Almadén mercury mine. Whoever they were the foreign *asentistas* were a hated group, popularly regarded as leeches on the Spanish economy, accused of enriching themselves at the expense of the treasury and the taxpayer, charging excessive interest, appropriating the best revenues, and using their right to export silver for the crown as a cloak for private transactions. There was some truth in these allegations, but basically the foreign bankers simply supplied a demand, on a scale far beyond the capacity of Spanish financiers, and with an eye to the customer's unreliability. Eventually, their resources much reduced by the suspension of payments in 1627 and the insatiable demands of Philip IV and Olivares, the Italians were joined by a number of Portuguese financiers.

The Portuguese *marranos* were convert Jews, some of them descendants of Spanish Jews expelled in 1492. They were prominent in the domestic and international trade of Portugal; they almost monopolised the slave trade; and they handled spices, sugar and other colonial commodities. In Portugal they were vulnerable. The Inquisition suspected their orthodoxy and the populace resented their wealth. So they welcomed the union of the crowns and began to seek new pastures in Spain. In return for a handsome subsidy to the crown they were given the right to emigrate in 1601, and many of them immediately entered Spain. There they extended their business operations, and were soon accused of every misdemeanour from cornering the Indies trade to

[35] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 143–45.

[36] The number of insurance policies issued in Burgos dropped drastically in the first decade of the seventeenth century; see R. S. Smith, *The Spanish Guild Merchant. A History of the Consulado 1250–1700* (Durham, N.C., 1940), p. 71; see also Manuel Basas Fernández, *El Consulado de Burgos en el siglo XVI* (Madrid, 1963).

[37] A. Girard, 'Les étrangers dans la vie économique de l'Espagne au XVI[e] et XVII[e] siècles', *Annales d'Histoire Economique et Sociale*, xxiv (1933), 567–78; A. Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los extranjeros en la vida española durante el siglo XVII', *Estudios de Historia Social de España*, iv, 2 (1960), 293–426; H. Sánchez de Sopranis, 'Las naciones extrangeras en Cádiz durante el siglo XVII', *Estudios de Historia Social de España*, iv, 2 (1960), 643–877,

organising prostitution. The privilege of 1601 was revoked in 1610, but they simply evaded the law. From the beginning of Philip IV's reign they were lessees of royal revenues, notably the inland customs. Olivares, who seems to have been free of racial prejudice, brought them into the *asiento* business, and under his patronage they were allowed freedom of movement within the peninsula and to some extent protected from the attentions of the Inquisition.[38] In addition to the small group of *asentistas*—Duarte Fernández, Simón Suárez, Manuel de Paz, and Juan Núñez Saravia—lesser Portuguese businessmen swarmed into Spain to deploy their enterprise and capital, and particularly to procure a foothold in the Indies trade. By 1640 there were probably 2,000 Portuguese merchants in Seville alone. Not all of these immigrants escaped intact. One of the principal *asentistas*, Juan Núñez Saravia, was accused of judaising and exporting bullion to colleagues abroad, for which he suffered five years imprisonment, while others were subject to fines and confiscations.[39] Yet on the whole the Portuguese in Castile had a good run for their money under Olivares, and even in the first years of the Portuguese rebellion the Spanish authorities shielded most of them from popular hatred. After the fall of Olivares, however, they were more vulnerable; some of them were further hit by the state bankruptcy of 1647; and the Castilian economy became too depressed to offer them easy profits.[40] The mid-seventeenth century, therefore, saw a further flight of merchants and capital from Spain, as the Portuguese went in search of new opportunities in northern Europe, leaving behind from their number only a few administrators of royal revenues.

Meanwhile other foreigners filled the ranks vacated by Spaniards and Portuguese. Spain's overseas trade, especially the Indies trade, drew increasing numbers of foreign merchants to her ports as importers, exporters, factors and agents.[41] This was simply another sign of the country's underdevelopment. Spain was a good export market for manufactured goods and a useful source of certain raw materials. As the foreigners had the goods, the capital and the shipping, they could retain in their own hands the whole import–export operation, reducing their Spanish counterparts to little more than commission agents. Many of the foreign merchants became permanent residents in Spain; they were to be found chiefly in Seville and Cadiz, where

[38] A. Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los conversos de orígen judío después de la expulsión', *Estudios de Historia Social de España*, iii (1955), 226–431.

[39] A. Domínguez Ortiz, 'El proceso inquisitorial de Juan Núñez Saravia, banquero de Felipe IV', *Hispania*, xv (1955), 559–81.

[40] J. Caro Baroja, *Los judíos en la España moderna y contemporánea* (3 vols., Madrid, 1962), ii, 68–131; Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition* (London, 1965), pp. 221–26.

[41] Sánchez de Sopranis, 'Las naciones extranjeras en Cádiz durante el siglo XVII', *op. cit.*, pp. 647–59.

they could supervise the re-export of their goods to the Spanish Indies. In the course of the seventeenth century the Genoese and Flemings were joined in the ports of Andalucía by growing numbers of non-allied nationals, notably the French, English and Dutch. Spain had a liberal immigration policy and her reputation for religious intolerance was much exaggerated abroad; by the middle of the century the English had developed a working relation with the Inquisition and they were allowed in effect to reside in Spain without harassment; even during wartime, when their position was necessarily more difficult, many of them chose to remain. The actual number of foreigners in Spain at any one time is a matter of speculation. In 1640 Seville had about 12,000, one-tenth of its population; in 1665, after the ravages of the great plague, the city still had 7,000 foreigners. Altogether, in 1650, there were between 120,000 and 150,000 foreign residents in the whole country.[42] These in effect were Spain's entrepreneurial class.

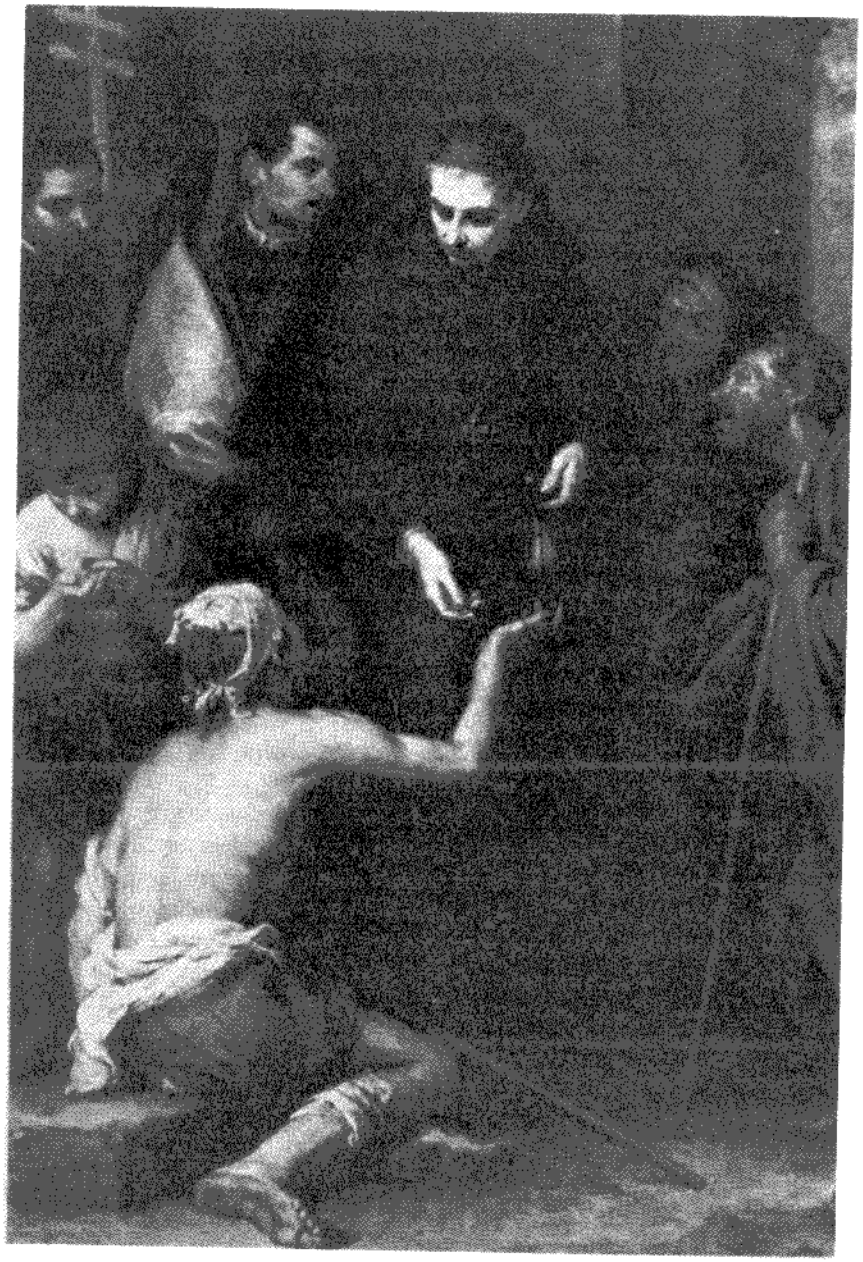
The vast majority of Spaniards, peasants in the fields, labourers in the towns, had no hope of advancement, only the fear that they might fall even lower, into that underworld of Spanish society populated by vagabonds, beggars and bandits, the victims of widespread unemployment. Again, fiscal policy perpetuated social malaise, for it weighed most heavily on the underprivileged. The *alcabala* tax was particularly loaded against the poor; the ultimate consumer bought an article at a price inflated by an accumulation of taxes charged every time it changed hands.[43] From the end of the sixteenth century a new tax appeared, the *millones*, and this fell chiefly on three basic foodstuffs, meat, wine and oil. For the poor this caused an intolerable rise in the cost of living, and one which they were less capable of evading than the nobility. Where towns or districts paid a composition tax, the municipalities, dominated by a wealthy oligarchy, fixed the tax rates to benefit themselves; then they frequently sold the products of their estates with the purchase tax added, passing only a portion to the treasury. The fiscal system accelerated the rural depopulation of Castile. And as some people fled from the tax-collector, the quota for that district fell entirely on those who remained, who in turn would be driven to emigrate. Not a few villages of Castile disappeared from the map in the course of the century, their inhabitants joining the urban proletariat, not because the towns were booming or could offer them work but because there was less likelihood of starving there than in the countryside. Many Spaniards lived more or less below subsistence level, and bitter experience taught them that from those who had least most was taken.

[42] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los extranjeros en la vida española durante el siglo XVII', *op. cit.*, pp. 389–91.
[43] Sureda Carrión, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

On more than one occasion, in Andalucía in the 1650's and in Valencia later in the century, peasant unrest exploded into violence, but the alliance between crown and aristocracy was too close and the forces of law and order were too solid to leave any opening for social revolution. In the event the mass of the Spanish poor accepted their fate with mute resignation. Their only spokesmen were a few *arbitristas*, though these did not always go to the root of the problem which lay in the maldistribution of agrarian property. Many of them criticised fiscal injustice or, as Jacinto de Alcázar Arriaza put it, 'the inequality in the system of taxes, which the poor pay and the rich enjoy'.[44] Fernández Navarrete denounced tax exemption: 'It is not just that some should be exempt at the expense of others and that the whole burden should fall on the weak shoulders of peasants and labourers'.[45] Padre López Bravo, writing at the beginning of Philip IV's reign, attacked the distribution of property: 'It is highly pernicious that poverty should have its origin in an unjust distribution of wealth, causing the affluence of the few and the deprivation of the many. . . . The result is that people abandon the countryside for the towns; the poor become slaves of the rich; and the rich intensify their pursuit of luxury and pleasure'.[46] In the 1620's the Benedectine Benito de Peñalosa y Mondragón recorded the 'extreme misery' of the Castilian peasants, their 'simple meals of garlic, onions, low-grade beef, bread of barley and rye'; their rough clothes, 'sandals, loose coats, large hoods, coarse collars, burlap shirts, sheepskin coats preserved with resin'; their miserable dwellings, 'poor cottages and huts with mud walls crumbling or fallen'; and their pitiful possessions, 'ill-cultivated fields, with emaciated and starving cattle, deprived of common lands for pasture'.[47]

The Spanish peasants were hopeless victims of the seigneurial society in which they lived, a society rigid in its structure and undeviating in its ideals. No doubt underdevelopment immobilised this society and prolonged its stagnation. Perhaps economic growth would have raised the living standards of the peasants and nurtured a native middle class. But social rigidity was a cause as well as a result of economic depression. The pattern of investment in Spain reflected the structure of society. When it was not hoarded or spent in conspicuous consumption, capital tended to flow into *asientos*, *juros* and *censos*, that is loans destined primarily to finance state and consumer expenditure, rather than into productive enterprises. One of the reasons was the higher rate of return on these investments—7 per cent. on *censos*, much more on *asientos*—than on those in other undertakings; agriculture, according to the *arbitristas*, yielded a return of only 4 per cent. But the basic reason was to

[44] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 181.
[45] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 194.
[46] Quoted by J. Reglà, 'La época de los dos ultimos Austrias', *Historia social y económica de España y América*, iii, 272.
[47] Quoted *ibid.*, pp. 325–26.



St Thomas of Villanueva by Murillo

be found in deeply rooted social ideals, which placed greater value on honour and status than on entrepreneurial activity. Even if the consumption level of the upper income groups could have been reduced there was no guarantee that the savings would have been invested in agriculture and industry.

4. Agriculture and Industry

Spain can be divided into two parts, wet and dry. In both these Spains the people had to struggle against adverse topographical or climatic conditions. In the plains of Castile, Extremadura and Andalucía rainfall was erratic and the soil poor; when it rained it rained in torrents on a soil subject to erosion; and in the summer there was drought. The arid terrain of the central plateau discouraged tillage and made it difficult to extend and improve cultivation. In those areas where rainfall was adequate, in Galicia for example, the soil was frequently bad with high acidic content. If there was little investment in agriculture, therefore, one of the reasons was that the land was not good enough to guarantee returns. It would have needed a technical revolution to make it so. Yet while their inheritance was meagre, Spaniards did not endeavour to use it wisely. Although in the course of the seventeenth century there was some extension of new crops, such as the potato and maize, this was not on a scale to produce agricultural change. The area under cultivation did not increase in the course of the century. Land tenure remained inefficient and cultivation backward.[48]

Some parts of Spain had been forced into fertility by irrigation and hard work. Valencia, for example, had been endowed with rich *huertas* (market gardens), and even the arid uplands had been made to yield crops by the industry of the moriscos. The expulsion of the latter adversely affected production, particularly of the basic crops of the region: sugar, rice and grain, so that Valencia, according to a contemporary chronicler, 'which was formerly the most flourishing region of Spain is now reduced to an arid and neglected desert'.[49] Sugar output had hardly recovered when it was further hit by competition from Brazilian and Caribbean sugar.[50] Rice production no longer yielded a surplus for export, and after 1609 Valencia was dependent on imported grain. Finally, the expulsion of the moriscos caused an even greater concentration of agrarian property, for in the hard times which followed only the biggest and most powerful landowners could survive.

[48] Manuel Colmeiro, *Historia de la economía política en España* (first published 1863; 2 vols., Madrid, 1965), ii, 657–717.

[49] Quoted by Boronat, *Los moriscos españoles y su expulsión*, ii, 329.

[50] Reglà, 'La expulsión de los moriscos y sus consecuencias en la economía valenciana', *op. cit.* pp. 211–12.

Meanwhile Castile was also losing its labour force. Rural depopulation seems to have reached serious proportions from the late sixteenth century. In 1598 the cortes urged the government to take measures to increase farming and stock-breeding: 'The principal cause of decrease in cultivation is the great dearth of people; many places are visibly depopulated and others have lost almost half of their inhabitants'.[51] Observers pointed specifically to the shortage of labourers, blaming wars, emigration to the Indies, sale of common land, pressure of powerful landlords, and above all fiscal inequality which caused people to flee from the tax-collector.[52] The Duero basin was one of the zones particularly affected; it was estimated that in the first two decades of the seventeenth century the number of labourers in the diocese of Salamanca dropped from 8,345 to 4,135, and more than eighty places had been depopulated. It was probably this region that the count of Gondomar, whose home was in Valladolid, had in mind when he wrote of the depopulation, poverty and misery of Spain, the land which foreigners found more distressing and deserted than any other in Europe.[53]

The evidence from government reports and private memoranda are too consistent to be ignored. Lison y Biedma, member for Granada in the cortes of 1621, recorded:

> Numerous places have become depopulated and disappeared from the map, in some provinces as many as fifty or sixty, their churches decayed, houses in ruins, property wasted, and fields uncultivated. The vassals who formerly cultivated them now wander the roads with their wives and children, searching from district to district for a living, and eating herbs and roots to keep alive. Others go to distant provinces which are not so burdened with taxation, with the *millones*, the *alcabalas* and other impositions; for it is the weight of taxation and the oppression of the tax-collectors which are the principal causes of this depopulation.[54]

Other observers attributed rural depopulation to the sale of *tierras baldías*, or common waste lands. Alienation of the commons, authorised by Philip II and his successors, deprived the poor of the plots which they were supposed to receive in rotation, of pasture for their cattle, sheep and goats, and of firewood from the forests, all of which had been of common usage in the villages. In 1628 the *arbitrista* Barbón y Castañeda remarked: 'If the sale of common land is extended to the rest of Spain then it will experience the

[51] *Actas*, xv, 748.

[52] Reports of corregidores, c. 1600, in Viñas y Mey, *El problema de la tierra en la España de los siglos XVI–XVII*, appendix I.

[53] Gondomar to Philip III, 1619, *Documentos inéditos para la historia de España* (new series, 4 vols., Madrid, 1936–45), ii, 131–46.

[54] Quoted by Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, p. 119.

same ruin as Old Castile; for it is a truism that the population level of towns and villages depends on the status and treatment accorded to their inhabitants'.[55] By the 1660's, after half a century of war and other adversities, the situation had further deteriorated. According to a memorandum written by a royal minister in 1669:

> This country has now plunged the depths of misfortune and reached a state of prostration unprecedented in our history. In the course of my office I have to visit many places which a few years ago had 1000 inhabitants and now have less than 500, while those which used to have 500 now have barely 100. In all of them there are numerous families who go one or two days without a full meal, and others live on herbs and roots from the fields.[56]

Declarations of this kind, of course, are statistically unreliable, and their authors tend to generalise from a particular district. But their broad conclusions are vindicated by public documents, particularly financial documents. Depopulation reached a point where communities had to request a lowering of the tax quota which they had been set in the registers of 1591–94. The administration only granted a reduction when a community had lost one-half or one-third of its population. Surviving evidence reveals that 156 communities requested, and in most cases procured, a reduction of their tax quota in the course of the seventeenth century, and these communities were only a portion of those which became depopulated.[57] Most of them were in the two Castiles, Extremadura and Andalucía, that is in dry Spain. The zone of maximum depopulation was around Guadalajara and Toledo in New Castile. The inhabitants of these bleak plains and wild *sierras* scraped a living from the cultivation of vines and olives and later from cereal monoculture. Abrupt climatic changes in the second half of the seventeenth century and in particular a series of disastrous frosts ruined this marginal cultivation and caused the mass exodus of its practitioners, most of whom presumably made their way to nearby Madrid.

Some of the causes of rural depopulation—plague, famine and war—have already been noticed. In addition to these classical adversities, there were certain institutional obstacles to agricultural progress in this period. One of these, though probably the least important, was price control of grain. Throughout the sixteenth century government controls were consistently

[55] Quoted *ibid.*, pp. 119–20.

[56] Quoted by Duque de Maura, *Vida y reinado de Carlos II* (2nd ed., 2 vols., Madrid, 1954), i, 396.

[57] Domínguez Ortiz publishes the details in *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, appendix I, pp. 325–37.

applied in an effort to counter rising prices. This policy, of course, favoured the consumer against the producer, whose own costs were also subject to inflation, and it was highly unpopular with farmers and peasants. In the first half of the seventeenth century there was a gradual movement towards a free market in grain, in a belated attempt to improve production and alleviate rural distress. Between 1619 and 1628, and again from 1632 to 1650, farmers were free to sell their grain at unregulated prices. By this time agriculture was too stagnant to respond to price de-control alone. But even in its hey-day the policy of control had never been fully enforced and farmers had been driven to devise means of exceeding the ceilings. This factor, therefore, was not a major cause of agricultural depression.[58]

Taxation was one of the greatest obstacles to farming in Spain. Burden after burden was imposed on the Castilian peasant, until the weight became more than he could bear. First he paid dues to his lord. Then he paid tithes to the church, and these were one of his heaviest outgoings, some ten to twenty times higher than seigneurial dues. Next he paid taxes to the crown, the *servicios* and *millones* on basic consumer goods. Finally he paid rent to his landlord and instalments on his mortgage. At the end of the sixteenth century these accumulated obligations consumed more than 50 per cent. of a peasant's product in New Castile.[59] In other words more than half of the crop so laboriously farmed by the New Castilian peasantry went to enrich non-peasant classes. And from the pittance that remained to him the peasant farmer had to live, support his family, pay his labourers, renew his equipment and buy his seeds. Little wonder that many of them abandoned the struggle in despair.

The peasant farmer was caught between the tax-collector and the big landowner. The concentration of landed property in the hands of the higher nobility was difficult to break and easy to extend. Established in their vast latifundia, secured by entail, and fortified by seigneurial power, the aristocracy were in an impregnable position which only their own improvidence could subvert. And they were well placed to make further conquests. As they dominated the higher administration and municipal government they could appropriate common land with impunity and without too much expense. They also absorbed farms previously owned by small proprietors who could not keep up with their overheads, their taxes, and their mortgage repayments. The *censos*, or mortgage system, offered only a short-term escape for the small farmer and he tended to ruin himself by it.[60] The time came when

[58] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 254–56.
[59] Noël Salomon, *La campagne de Nouvelle Castille à la fin du XVI^e siècle d'après les Relaciones topográficas* (Paris, 1964), pp. 212–51.
[60] *Ibid.*, pp. 245–47.

many of them were forced to redeem their mortgages at the expense of their property and sell out to their more powerful neighbours, who were anxious to round off their estates. Many aristocratic proprietors were absentee landlords who regarded their estates as a status symbol rather than an investment. The great estate was a social not an economic institution. It was wasteful of land and rarely became an efficient unit of production. It was a further obstacle to rural change.

Depressed by taxation and the agrarian structure, agriculture was then kept prostrate by the traditional bias towards livestock farming in Castile.[61] The Mesta, the organisation of migrating herdsmen, had already won the struggle for access to commons, waste lands, fallow strips adjoining tilled fields and other town lands; the notorious law of *posesión*, by which a Mesta member was granted permanent tenancy of any field he had occupied, continued to operate; and Philip II and his successors reinforced previous legislation in favour of pastoral and against arable farming.[62] The cumulative effect of this policy was to prevent the extension of arable lands in central and southern Castile and to accelerate rural depopulation. Yet in the second half of the sixteenth century the power of the Mesta had begun to wane. Its flocks of sheep and its wool production ceased to expand; its profits were eroded by heavy taxation; and its legal position was gradually subverted. In a series of important law-suits Mesta members lost a number of pasture privileges. Their opponents were towns and local agrarian interests, fighting for possession of common lands. But this was not a victory for arable farming: the new enclosers were simply the sedentary branch of the pastoral industry, enclosing for ox pastures, swine fields and non-migratory sheep grazing. By the end of the seventeenth century, under pressure of independent landowners, farmers and peasants, the Mesta had further retreated, but so had arable farming.[63] The consequence of this was that Spain continued to suffer periodic subsistence crises and to depend on the import of foreign grain. Valencia needed imports from the Mediterranean area, Andalucía from northern Europe. In 1635, during the war with the United Provinces and France, when trade with the enemy was prohibited, San Sebastian complained that Guipúzcoa was suffering from severe grain shortage, because its normal suppliers, the Dutch and the French, were excluded from Spanish ports.[64]

Thwarted on every side, agriculture yielded progressively less in the course of the seventeenth century, especially on small farms. There was no

[61] See *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 17–19, 123–4, 151.
[62] J. Klein, *The Mesta. A Study in Spanish Economic History, 1273–1836* (Cambridge, Mass., 1920), pp. 93–94, 322.
[63] *Ibid.*, pp. 279, 337–43.
[64] A. Domínguez Ortiz, 'Guerra económica y comercio extranjero en el reinado de Felipe IV', *Hispania*, xxiii (1963), 94–95.

technical progress to enable farmers to expand production and cut costs. As the *arbitrista* Pérez del Barrio noted in 1697: 'We still follow the ancient method of scratching at the top-soil with a plough, then letting it lie fallow for three or four years, without ever asking the real causes of sterility but attributing everything to lack of water'.[65]

Agriculture was the key which locked the door to economic growth in Spain. Without agrarian reform there was no prospect of raising the living standards of the mass of the people, and without this there was no possibility of industrial development. Peasants living at subsistence level were not regular consumers of manufactures; and urban workers had to pay too much for food to have anything left for consumer goods. Inhibited by the mediocrity of the market, industry was also frustrated by the pattern of consumption and investment in Spain. The small luxury market preferred foreign goods, which were a drain on domestic capital; what was left was invested in state and consumer loans rather than risked in industrial enterprise.[66] Guild organisation, with its defensive mentality and the values placed on hierarchy and seniority, maintained a rigid framework around production. And even when industry escaped from guild control into artisan and workshop form, as in ironworks and some manufactures, its progress was still inhibited by social attitudes and prejudice against 'low and mechanical' occupations. Industry was also depressed by the fiscal policy of the state which penalised production by heavy purchase taxes.[67] But this was not all. Internal customs barriers impeded the free movement of materials and goods. There were customs posts between Castile, the Basque provinces, Navarre, the Aragonese provinces, and Andalucía; and royal customs, usually at 10 per cent., were accompanied by numerous municipal and seigneurial tolls, which further encumbered the transit of goods.[68] It was frequently cheaper to import foreign manufactures by sea than to place orders within Spain. As Gondomar pointed out in 1616:

[65] Quoted by Reglà, 'La época de los dos últimos Austrias', *Historia social y económica de España y América*, iii, 342.

[66] For a different interpretation of the failure of Spanish industry see E. J. Hamilton, 'American Treasure and the Rise of Capitalism, 1500–1700', *Economica*, ix (1929), 338–57. According to Hamilton, the lag of prices behind wages in Spain gave insufficient profits to manufacturers and deterred investment in industry, while there was no technical progress to reduce costs; but it has still to be shown that wages of industrial workers in Spain were in general higher than those of workers in industrialising countries. See the same author's 'The Decline of Spain', *Economic History Review*, 1st ser. viii (1938), 168–79. An informed and balanced judgement will be found in Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, *El Antiguo Régimen: los Reyes Católicos y los Austrias* (2nd ed., Madrid, 1974), pp. 131–39.

[67] Salvador de Moxo, *La alcabala. Sobre sus orígenes, concepto y naturaleza* (Madrid, 1963).

[68] J. Carrera Pujal, *Historia política y económica de Cataluña*, ii, 459.

> It would be better for Spain to remove all internal customs and to increase those at the ports, where foreigners would pay and not the natives who trade within the country ... It is more convenient at the moment for consumers in Galicia, Asturias, Vizcaya, Navarre, Aragon, Valencia, Catalonia, Andalucía and Portugal to get their cloth from London than from Segovia.[69]

Virtually every sector of Spanish industry was depressed in the seventeenth century, though the depression was more serious in the major sectors—textiles, metallurgy and shipbuilding—than in light industries supplying local markets. The worst victim was the once-booming textile industry, embracing the woollen cloth of Segovia, Toledo and Cuenca, and the silks of Granada, Málaga, Seville and Toledo.[70] While none of these centres actually ceased production, all of them suffered severe recession, unemployment, and loss of export markets. Their individual performance cannot be charted with any precision, but their collapse is to be seen in its consequences. In the sixteenth century about 77 per cent. of the active population of Segovia was occupied in industry, 65 per cent. in the textile industry. Segovia consumed a good part of the raw wool of Old Castile, and its great boom in the years 1570–90 took place to some extent at the expense of Burgos, which owed its previous prosperity to the export of raw wool. But the number of textile mills in Segovia fell in the course of the seventeenth century from some 600 to 159, while its population dropped from 25,000 to 8,000. The population of Cuenca fell from 15,000 to 5,000. Toledo's failure was spectacular. Measured in the number of looms in operation, its woollen output fell by three-quarters in the first two-thirds of the seventeenth century; in the 1660's thousands of silk looms closed down, and by 1685 there were only 600 in active operation; and its population fell from 60,000 in the late sixteenth century to 20,000 in 1691, by which time Toledo was a town of churches and convents.[71] The depopulation of these industrial centres further reduced the demand for consumer goods, while the loss of skilled labour worsened the prospects of revival; subsequent attempts to rebuild the textile industry invariably involved the employment of foreign craftsmen or management. Spain continued to manufacture textiles, especially for the lower end of the

[69] Gondomar to Philip III, 1616, in Sureda Carrión, *op. cit.*, pp. 123–24.

[70] On Spanish industry in the seventeenth century see Colmeiro, *op. cit.*, ii, 783–97; J. Carrera Pujal, *Historia de la economía española* (5 vols., Barcelona, 1943–47), i–ii; Santiago Rodríguez García *El arte de las sedas valencianas en el siglo XVIII* (Valencia, 1959). On Segovia see Bartolomé Bennassar, *Valladolid au Siècle d'Or* (Paris, 1970), pp. 103–4, and Angel García Sanz, *Desarrollo y crisis del Antiguo Régimen en Castilla la Vieja. Economía y sociedad en tierras de Segovia, 1500–1814* (Madrid, 1977), p. 216.

[71] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 136–39.

market. Where she could not compete was in high quality textiles, as buyers preferred the foreign article to the national product, which tended to lack variety and style. To some extent Spanish textiles failed to adapt themselves to changes in consumer tastes. They lost the home market to competition from English cloth: England possessed a quasi-monopoly of long-staple light weight wool, especially suitable for wear in Mediterranean countries, and it was partly this which enabled English worsted manufacturers to dominate the Spanish market in the seventeenth century.[72]

Spain had formerly possessed a small but active metallurgical industry, centred in the northern provinces of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa. By the 1550's this consisted of some 300 iron-works, powered by large water-driven hammers, and producing about 300,000 quintals (3,300 tons) of iron and steel goods a year.[73] Two-thirds of this output consisted of arms, ships' parts, and general hardware, while the rest was in the form of ingots. Defence orders obviously provided a stimulus to the metallurgical industry and indeed exceeded its capacity. In the first decades of the seventeenth century Spanish firms were still supplying all types of arms but no longer on the scale with which they had supplied the Armada of 1588. By this time output of iron and steel manufactures seems to have dropped to some 100,000 quintals a year. A report of 1634 estimated that 80,000 quintals of iron and steel a year, about three-quarters in the form of manufactured products, were being shipped through Bilbao for other parts of Spain, for the colonies, and for export abroad.[74] The industry could no longer meet domestic requirements. As early as 1619 the *arbitrista* Sancho de Moncada claimed that although iron ore was exported the country had to import some 2 million ducats' worth of iron and steel manufactures every year. These included arms. The most famous centre for swords and daggers had been Toledo, but by the 1650's its forges had almost ceased production; Vizcaya still produced a few but they were extremely expensive.[75] In the second half of the seventeenth century the country depended for its hardware on England and France, who also supplied much of its military equipment. Spain, a military power for so long, no longer even possessed an adequate arms industry.

The shipbuilding industry had experienced a boom in the sixteenth century, stimulated by orders for the Indies trade and defence requirements.[76] Now orders were less frequent and more difficult to meet. The Barcelona shipyards,

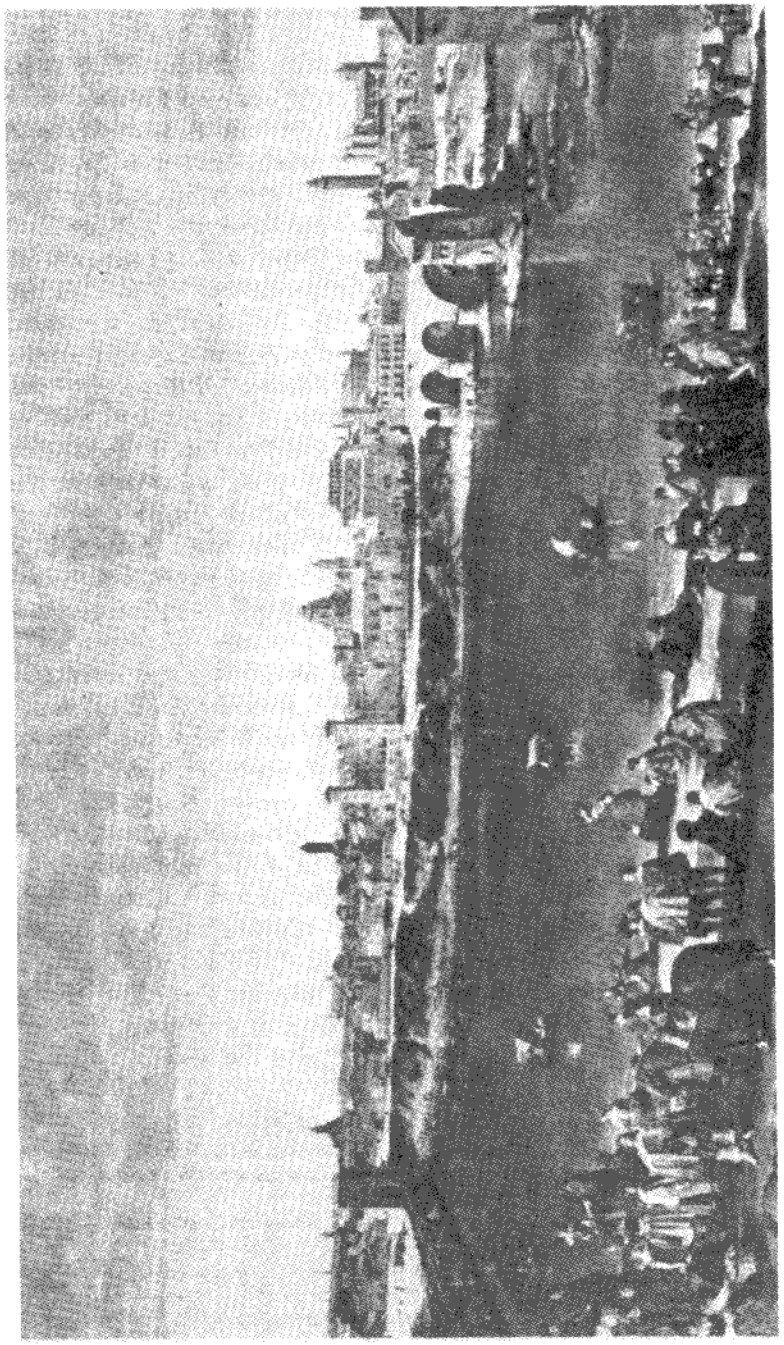
[72] P. J. Bowden, 'Wool supply and the woollen industry', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., ix (1956–57), 44–58.

[73] T. Guiard Larrauri, *Historia del Consulado y Casa de Contratación de Bilbao y del comercio de la villa (1511–1880)* (2 vols., Bilbao, 1913–14); J. Caro Baroja, *Los Vascos. Etnología* (San Sebastian, 1949), pp. 255–71.

[74] Guiard, *op. cit.*, i, 526.

[75] Antoine Brunel, 'Voyage d'Espagne' (1655), *Revue Hispanique*, xxx (1914), 119–376.

[76] See *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 125–7.



View of Zaragoza, 1647 by J. B. Martínez del Mazo

rescued from stagnation by Philip II's naval war against Islam, did not sustain their performance in the seventeenth century; shippers tended increasingly to purchase or hire vessels in Italy.[77] The shipyards of northern Spain were more active than those of Catalonia. Although they had come to depend heavily on imports of timber and naval stores from the Baltic, they had so far survived the attempts of Spain's northern enemies to cut these vital supplies. In the best years of the sixteenth century there were orders totalling 15,000 *toneladas* under construction at one time in the shipyards of Bilbao.[78] Production continued, though on a reduced scale, in the first decades of the seventeenth century, and vessels were still built for the navy, the merchant marine, including transports for iron, and the fishing industry. It was reported by the *consulado* of Bilbao in 1630 that 40 galleons, many of 600–700 tons, had been constructed in the port's shipyards during the previous twenty years. In 1640 there were four large vessels under construction, and in 1662 there were ten.[79] In 1677–79 five vessels were built in the various yards of Guipúzcoa. One of the leading shipbuilders in the first half of the century was Pedro de Colima who undertook to construct 12 galleons of 800 tons in 1638 and 6 galleons of 850 tons the following year in the shipyards of San Sebastian, Ubursil and Osorno.[80]

While the Basque shipbuilding industry survived in the seventeenth century it was only a shadow of its former self. It suffered in the first place from the recession in the Indies trade from the 1620's which seriously reduced investment in new ocean-going vessels.[81] It was, moreover, heavily dependent on foreign-based service industries for the supply of masts, tar, hemp and sail. Spain could not furnish appropriate timber in sufficient quantity, and she produced virtually no naval stores; these had to be imported from the Baltic, and as war material they were a particular target of the Dutch blockade. Shortage of naval stores raised their price; shipbuilding costs were also raised by shortage of skilled labour which inflated the industry's wages bill. Tomás Cano, a former captain, calculated in 1612 that a vessel of 500 tons, which in the mid-sixteenth century cost 4,000 ducats, now cost 15,000.[82] Yet adverse conditions were not the only enemy of the Basque shipbuilding

[77] Carrera Pujal, *Historia política y económica de Cataluña*, ii, 333–69.

[78] Gervasio de Artíñano de Galdárano, *Historia del comercio con las Indias durante el dominio de los Austrias* (Madrid, 1917), pp. 247–48; see the same author's *La arquitectura naval española (en madera)* (Madrid, 1920).

[79] Guiard, *op. cit.*, i, 531; see the same author's *La industria naval vizcaína. Anotaciones históricas y estadísticas* (Bilbao, 1917).

[80] José de Veítia Linaje, *Norte de la contratación de las Indias Occidentales* [1672] (Buenos Aires, 1945), p. 667. The price contracted for was 30 ducats a ton.

[81] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1046, 1520–21, 1597.

[82] *Arte de Navegar*, 1612, quoted in Braudel, *op. cit.*, p. 399.

industry. It was also a victim of its own technical failure. In the period 1614–22 the number of Basque-built vessels in the Indies trade fell dramatically; in the next three decades it fell further, and Basque vessels came to constitute less than one-third of those operating on the transatlantic run, losing place to foreign vessels (more than one-third) and even to American-built vessels (about one-third).[83] Shippers at Seville and Cadiz no longer merely tolerated foreign vessels: they preferred them, and one of the reasons was their superior quality. In the first quarter of the seventeenth century a series of losses at sea cast serious doubts upon the adequacy of Spanish-built ships and caused many shippers to complain of their technical inferiority. As more and more foreign transports entered the Indies trade the government made several attempts by decree to impose on the Basque industry new standards of construction and new proportions in vessels for the transatlantic run.[84] Yet by 1640 little progress had been made. A treatise published in that year focused on two weaknesses of the industry.[85] It was starved of naval stores and other raw materials, and these were only available at prices well above the general price-level. The industry also lacked technical proficiency, and was impervious to change; it still produced huge and ponderous galleons, floating castles which were years behind the vessels of northern Europe in manoeuvrability and adaptability.

While textiles, metallurgy and shipbuilding were all in serious trouble in the seventeenth century, import-substitution industries appear to have fared better. In Barcelona and Valencia the manufacture of ceramics and glass, drawing on local raw materials, maintained its performance, and output was probably adequate for the home market, though this was not large as glass was less used for windows in Spain than elsewhere in Europe. Leather manufacture at Córdoba (shoes), and Ciudad Real and Ocaña (gloves), seems to have diminished but still supplied the home market. Soap manufacturing was continued in establishments at Triana (Seville) and Valencia, and even succeeded in exporting some of its product. Paper mills, on the other hand, while continuing production at Segovia, Gerona and Cuenca, could not meet domestic demand, and Spain depended heavily on paper imports throughout the seventeenth century.[86]

The evidence is too scanty to permit a quantitative assessment of Spanish industry in the seventeenth century, and the most that it yields is a general

[83] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, vi, 1, pp. 114–67; viii, 2, 2, pp. 1563, 1682, 1757–58, 1831.

[84] See A. P. Usher, 'Spanish Ships and Shipping in the 16th and 17th centuries', in *Facts and Factors in Economic History. Essays presented to Edward Francis Gay* (Cambridge, Mass., 1932), pp. 189–90.

[85] 'Diálogo entre un vizcaíno y un montañés sobre construcción de naves', 1640, summarised in Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, v, p. 369; on the neglect of naval architecture in Spain see Veitia Linaje, *op. cit.*, p. 665.

[86] Colmeiro, *op. cit.*, ii, 783–97.

impression. Two conclusions may be justified. The traditional picture of universal and utter collapse has been overdrawn. A number of light industries, fed by local raw materials and catering for the home market, stayed in business and effectively substituted for imports. But in three of the European growth industries of the period—textiles, metallurgy and shipbuilding—Spain suffered serious recession and lagged far behind her rivals in northern Europe. She lost her export markets, of course, but she also lost a large part of her domestic and colonial markets; she lost them to the English, the French and the Dutch.

Contemporary proposals for remedying the situation were based on mercantilist assumptions.[87] A typical example was the submission made by the University of Toledo in a memorandum drafted by one of its professors, Sancho de Moncada. It was argued that countries which produced only primary products were poor and had a trade deficit, for the unit value of their exports was less than that of countries which exported manufactured goods; it followed that Spain should industrialise, and this was also essential for defence needs and to supply the colonies; and industry should be given protection by outright prohibition of foreign manufactured goods. The policy of import prohibition was frequently canvassed and occasionally adopted. A decree issued in the celebrated *Pragmática de Reformación* (10 February 1623) forbad under pain of fine and confiscation the import of textile, leather, and other manufactures for the consumer market, on the grounds that these competed with Spanish products, put Spanish factories and artisans out of work, and impaired the balance of payments.[88] Amidst a chorus of protest from foreign exporters and native importers, the government was forced to concede so many exemptions that the decree became irrelevant. Prohibition simply caused a diminution of trade or, more likely, an expansion of contraband, from both of which the treasury suffered. The basic reason for the failure of this policy was that Spain either took foreign imports or went without manufactures altogether. For the removal of competition could not in itself revive Spanish industry. The mercantilists never explained where the factors of production were to come from. Who was to supply the capital, the entrepreneurial skills and the technical expertise for industrial expansion? And would not industrialisation simply divert resources which could be better used to expand the production of wool, agricultural and other primary

[87] On contemporary economic thought see E. J. Hamilton, 'Spanish Mercantilism before 1700', in *Facts and Factors in Economic History*, pp. 214–39; Robert S. Smith, 'Spanish Anti-mercantilism of the Seventeenth Century', *Journal of Political Economy*, xlviii (1940), 401–11; J. Larraz, *La época del mercantilismo en Castilla*, 1500–1700 (2nd ed., Madrid, 1944).

[88] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Guerra económica y comercio extranjero en el reinado de Felipe IV' *Hispania*, xxiii (1963), 71–110.

products already assured of export markets? Even as an exporter of raw materials Spain's performance was not impressive.

5. Foreign Trade

Spain's commodity exports were limited to a few primary products—wool, wine, olive oil, iron, and cochineal (a re-export from America). Against these she imported textiles, linens, hardware, naval stores, paper, and grain. Large foreign payments also had to be made for defence purposes. The deteriorating balance of payments was bridged by export of gold and silver, when they were available.

Wool continued to be the most important Spanish export commodity. By the end of the sixteenth century the quality of Spanish wool in fineness was accepted as superior to English and it was doing much better than its rival in continental wool markets.[89] Spanish wool maintained its reputation until well past the middle of the seventeenth century. In the meantime it had secured a good market in England. English manufacturers began to increase their import of fine Spanish wool from the 1620's; it was this wool which enabled the West Country to develop the production of a new type of cloth, called Spanish or medley cloth, a high quality product which sold well in northern Europe.[90] In 1667, at the time of the Anglo-Spanish commercial treaty, it was estimated that Spain exported 36,000 to 40,000 bags of wool a year, with 8 *arrobas* of wool in each bag; Holland and Hamburg took 22,000 bags, England between 2,000 and 7,000 bags.[91] While Spanish wool was of good quality it was also expensive. This was due not only to inflationary tendencies in Spain but also to government taxes on wool exports. By 1667 these had reached a level which caused the *consulado* of Bilbao to complain that they were almost equivalent to the value of the commodity taxed.[92] An English estimate in 1680 claimed that fine Spanish wool was 'always near twice as dear as our finest English wool'.[93]

Following the collapse of Burgos, the wool trade was almost entirely handled by the merchants of Bilbao. Bilbao also exported iron, a high quality ore from its hinterland, for which there was a fairly constant demand. In 1680 it was complained in England that the great increase in the import of Spanish iron was detrimental to native iron works.[94] Between wool and iron

[89] Bowden, 'Wool supply and the woollen industry', *op. cit.*, p. 48.

[90] *Ibid.*, pp. 56–58.

[91] Jean O. McLachlan, *Trade and Peace with Old Spain, 1667–1750* (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 8–9.

[92] Klein, *op. cit.*, p. 46; Smith, *The Spanish Guild Merchant*, pp. 74–75.

[93] 'Discourse of Trade', 1680, in J. R. McCulloch, ed., *Early English Tracts on Commerce* (Cambridge, 1954), p. 322.

[94] *Ibid.*, p. 418.

Bilbao enjoyed some prosperity in the seventeenth century. While the account books of *consulado* income are not a valid index of trade, they give perhaps a general picture of commercial activity. The *consulado* of Bilbao's average annual income was some 607,000 maravedis in the period 1590–96; 565,000 in 1600–25; 725,000 in 1626–51; 1,850,000 in 1651–77; 2,555,000 in 1677–1701.[95] From this it would appear that Bilbao maintained some activity in maritime commerce, and did not suffer the fate of other commercial centres in Spain. The volume of Bilbao's shipping in this period can be deduced from the evidence of the charity tax on each vessel entering and clearing the port. An average of 209 vessels a year paid the tax in the period 1601–26; 184 in 1626–51; 211 in 1651–75; 213 in 1675–1700.[96]

In the first half of the seventeenth century Spanish foreign trade had to operate in conditions of almost permanent warfare. Yet war never caused a complete cessation of trade, even with the enemy. In the long war with England to 1604, and with the United Provinces to 1609, Spain had to allow her enemies to bring grain and manufactured goods into the peninsula, for she needed these imports and did not have the shipping to handle them; for the rest of her northern trade she had to rely on Hansa shipping. The route between Cadiz and northern Europe, therefore, was still active. Following the renewal of war between Spain and the United Provinces in 1621, the Dutch continued to trade with Spain by various means, inserting their goods via France and Portugal. The trade was so active that the Council of Castile complained in 1624: 'The Dutch buy merchandise from the English, export it here, and take out gold and silver, with which they then finance their rebellion against us'.[97]

The Spanish government attempted to fight back on the commercial front. In October 1624 it created the *Almirantazgo de Sevilla*, a kind of trading company whose function was to provide armed convoys for trade with northern Europe, to attack Dutch shipping, and to keep it out of the peninsula.[98] The company was therefore instructed to maintain an armada of 24 warships and merchant vessels, financed from prizes, condemnations, and a 1 per cent. tax on goods from Andalucía to northern Europe. In view of the difficulty experienced in maintaining armed convoys for the Indies trade, it is not surprising that the *almirantazgo* failed to function in this form. It soon became simply a bureaucratic institution, based on Madrid, which maintained

[95] Smith, *The Spanish Guild Merchant*, p. 89.
[96] *Ibid.*, pp. 89–90.
[97] Quoted by Domínguez Ortiz, 'Guerra económica', *op. cit.*, p. 75; see also Mauro, *Le Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVII^e siècle*, p. 342.
[98] A. Domínguez Ortiz, 'El Almirantazgo de los Países Septentrionales y la política económica de Felipe IV', *Hispania*, xxvii (1947), 272–90.

a network of agents for the confiscation of enemy goods entering the peninsula.[99] The English during the war of 1625–30, and the French during the war of 1635–59, suffered from its attentions. And so, until 1648, did the Dutch. Indeed they were the particular target of this type of economic warfare, but they were skilful enemies. They devised various means of evading the embargo; a favoured method, in collaboration with Spanish merchants, was to exchange goods for silver a few miles from the coast.

Spanish merchants complained bitterly against the *almirantazgo*, alleging that it fulfilled none of its positive functions but simply restricted valuable trade. They argued that obstacles to imports not only caused shortages and drove up prices but also harmed Spanish exports, to such an extent that the wine and olive producers of Andalucía were in serious difficulty. Seville merchants were particularly resentful, for they were deprived of their usual supplies for the American trade, and this in turn reduced the sale of re-exports from America; according to the *consulado* of Seville, the price of cochineal, indigo, and ginger dropped by 25 per cent.[100] Yet the government of Olivares continued to prohibit trade with the enemy, in the belief that prohibition deprived the enemy of wealth. A decree of 16 May 1628 further defined illegal trade: it included enemy and neutral goods carried in enemy vessels, and enemy goods carried in neutral vessels. The list of prohibited goods indicates the type of imports on which Spain normally relied: textiles headed the list, followed by furniture, watches, books, pictures, needles, combs and musical instruments.

Although these measures ceased to apply against England after the Anglo-Spanish peace of 1630, they were intensified against France, especially from the outbreak of full-scale war in 1635. But total closure was never effected. French linens always found a ready market in Spain, chiefly for re-export to the Indies; and shippers relied on the import of French sails for equipping the Indies fleets.[101] The frontier provinces of north-east Spain were also dependent on trade with France, in their case for food imports as well as consumer goods. In these circumstances prohibition was evaded by various devices, ranging from outright contraband to the use of neutral vessels—mainly Hansa and English—which endeavoured to conceal the origins of their cargo. The government itself recognised the need for French imports, from which it could also derive a revenue. It therefore sold licences: in 1638 revenue from licences yielded 255,460 ducats, indicating a substantial trade with France, for the licencees usually exceeded their quotas. In any case, the

[99] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Guerra económica', *op. cit.*, pp. 78–81, 85.
[100] Memorandum of the consulado of Seville, 1627, *ibid.*, pp. 85–86.
[101] In the years 1636–37 there was a spurt of demand in the Indies trade which reinforced the need for French goods; see Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, v, p. 237; viii, 2, 2, p. 1757.

government could not control climatic conditions and it had to allow the entry of French grain. The Cantabrian region continued to import French grain, and in 1647, a year of poor harvests, Andalucía was allowed to do the same. In 1648 the government believed that peace with Holland would enable it to tighten up on the French trade, as it now had an alternative trading partner. In fact the Dutch simply took the opportunity to carry French merchandise into Spain, as the English were already doing.

By 1650 it was appreciated even in official circles that measures against French trade were ineffective. Yet the policy of prohibiting trade with the enemy continued to be applied, and, by decree of 8 April, it was extended to a new enemy, Cromwell's England. In 1657 the Council of Castile debated its efficacy. A minority group argued that the policy was ineffective and harmful, ineffective because corrupt customs officials connived at evasion, harmful because it deprived the treasury of revenue. Yet the majority of councillors favoured prohibition as a weapon of war and believed that it could be made effective if the Portuguese lessees were removed from the customs houses. In the event the weapon was as harmless against England as it had been against France. English goods continued to reach Spain, frequently in Dutch vessels, and to be re-exported to the Spanish Indies.

During war Spain was a target as well as a market for her enemies. Normally the Indies fleets were too strongly defended to offer easy prizes to privateers, and by this time there were very few Spanish vessels on the trade routes of western and northern Europe. Enemy privateering, therefore, was directed essentially against neutral vessels trading in war commodities to Spain. The English took a much stricter view of war contraband than the French and the Dutch, who were prepared to deal in most commodities, including naval stores. English privateers crowded the Channel and sought to cut communications between Spain and northern Europe, at least in respect of vital war supplies. During the war of 1625–30 they were particularly active off the north-west coast of Spain and kept Galicia virtually in a state of siege.[102] In the war of 1655–60, on the other hand, the privateers tended to trade with the enemy, and it was the English navy that conducted operations against Spanish shipping. Spain herself did not develop a privateering industry: there were very few Spanish candidates for licences, and foreign captains could not be trusted. When, after 1648, a number of Dutch captains procured Spanish privateering licences for use against French shipping, they simply traded with France, took the merchandise to the Spanish Indies, and sold it as an alleged prize of war. Basque captains did the same. In 1651 it was alleged that 12–14 vessels were operating in this

[102] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Guerra económica', *op. cit.*, pp. 96–98.

way.[103] Normally, however, Spain did not issue privateering licences, for she was fearful of massive retaliation.

By the mid-seventeenth century Spain's balance of payments difficulties had worsened. Her export performance was poor: wool output was not increasing, and wine, oil, raisins and other agricultural products were earning little. Bullion had to be expended on Portuguese sugar and spices, on grain from northern Europe and the Mediterranean, and on manufactured goods, arms and naval stores from England, France, Holland, Denmark and Sweden. As an English observer remarked in 1680, 'The exporting of treasure [is] prohibited in Spain under the highest penalties; and yet because Spain is overbalanced by consumptive importations, foreigners continually carry it away'.[104]

Yet peace was hardly more propitious than war. As Spain did not win her prolonged war against Holland, France and finally England, she was forced to concede favourable trading terms to her former enemies, to the Dutch in 1648–50, to the French in 1659, and to the English in 1667. The Dutch were acknowledged to have complete freedom to transport merchandise of all countries, including those at war with Spain. By the Treaty of the Pyrenees France procured a most-favoured-nation clause, giving her all the privileges the Dutch had already acquired; and French merchants spent the rest of the century exploiting the treaty.[105] Customs duties were limited; merchants' accounts and warehouses were free from inspection; consuls were appointed in Andalusian towns; and eventually a Judge Conservator was appointed to hear cases involving Frenchmen. Under favourable conditions French trade to Andalucía—chiefly Rouen linens and Lyons silks—expanded rapidly and acquired a large stake in the Indies trade.

The pattern of Spanish trade with England was already established.[106] The chief import was cloth, especially the new worsted fabrics. Fish was another important item, worth perhaps £500,000 a year to England. Spain also took lead, tin, wax, wheat, butter and cheese. She exported oil, wine, dried fruit, iron ore and above all two basic commodities for the English cloth industry, wool and dyeing materials, the latter chiefly American cochineal.[107] England's considerable exports to Spain, and her command of the carrying trade between the two countries, earned her a surplus in bullion with which she financed her trade to other parts of the world. As English merchants

[103] *Ibid.*, pp. 99–100.

[104] 'Discourse of Trade', 1680, in McCulloch, *op. cit.*, pp. 390–91.

[105] A. Girard, *Le commerce français à Séville et Cadix au temps des Habsbourgs. Contribution à l'étude du commerce étranger en Espagne aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (Bordeaux, 1932), pp. 133–86.

[106] See Ralph Davis, 'English Foreign Trade, 1660–1700', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., vii (1954–55), 150–66.

[107] McLachlan, *Trade and Peace with Old Spain*, p. 10.

wryly remarked, the only advantage Spain possessed was the ability to place an embargo on English property in the event of war: 'In time of free trade with Spain the subjects of England have seldom less in that country than one million pounds sterling besides the great number of ships . . . and in England the Spaniards have no estate to answer such an adventure'.[108]

The Anglo-Spanish treaty of 1667 improved the conditions of trade between the two countries, to the greater benefit of the more powerful partner.[109] It gave the English advantageous terms for important branches of their trade, including the carrying trade and the fishing industry. Without abolishing customs duties, it limited the number of customs officers who might visit an English ship and left the actual level of duties vague enough to enable English merchants to negotiate with compliant officials. And individual merchants came to enjoy the protection of a Judge Conservator who, among other things, prevented inspection of their books. Armed with this treaty, the English developed their trade to Spain in the last decades of the seventeenth century. Spain, on the other hand, continued to suffer a large trade deficit. In 1697–98 the value of Spanish imports from England totalled £580,499 and her exports to England £354,165; in 1698–99 imports totalled £574,628 and exports £469,903; in 1699–1700 imports totalled £610,912 and exports £545,056. The balance against Spain was normally in the region of £100,000 to £200,000.[110]

In the eighteenth century Spanish economists and officials blamed the commercial treaties for Spain's trading adversities.[111] But the treaties did not create economic conditions; they simply reflected Spain's inferiority in manufactures, capital resources, and shipping. Contemporaries were particularly impressed by the 'drain' on Spain's bullion supplies. Ultimately these supplies were the returns which Spain earned from her investment in the Indies, an integral part of the Spanish economy. They were normally re-invested not in domestic production—shipbuilding perhaps excepted—but in foreign trade. Yet as long as Spain earned sufficient profits in America

[108] 'The Humble Complaint of Merchants', 1660–64, in J. O. McLachlan, 'Documents illustrating Anglo-Spanish trade between the commercial treaty of 1667 and the asiento contract of 1713', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, iv (1932–34), 299–311; see particularly p. 303.

[109] On the treaty of 1667 see *ibid.*, pp. 304–8, and the same author's *Trade and Peace with Old Spain*, pp. 20–22.

[110] McLachlan, 'Documents illustrating Anglo-Spanish Trade', *op. cit.*, pp. 310–11, and *Trade and Peace with Old Spain*, graph 1.

[111] A. Christelow, 'Great Britain and the trades from Cadiz and Lisbon to Spanish America and Brazil, 1759–1783', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, xxvii (1947), 2–29, and the same author's 'Economic Background of the Anglo-Spanish War of 1762', *Journal of Modern History*, xviii (1946), 22–36; see also Reglà, 'La época de los dos últimos Austrias', *Historia social y económica de España y América*, pp. 348–50; Girard, *Le commerce français à Séville et Cadix*, pp. 115–34.

to bridge her trade gap in Europe she could be said to be paying her way. In the course of the seventeenth century, however, returns from America dwindled to a trickle. The crisis in the Indies trade caused severe dislocation in the Spanish economy and contributed to its prolonged depression; the Indies trade was also a victim of that depression.

CHAPTER VII

AMERICAN TRADE: CONTRACTION AND CRISIS

1. The Monopoly: Seville and Cadiz

After a century of almost unbroken expansion Spain's American trade first contracted then collapsed. The great upswing of 1562–92 was followed by a plateau from 1593 to 1622 and a downward swing from 1623 to 1650; the trade did not recover until a century later. This profound crisis in the *carrera de Indias* had its roots within the trade itself and the colonial economies which fed it; but it was aggravated by challenge and violence from without which relentlessly eroded the Seville monopoly.

The ideal of a Castilian and more particularly an Andalusian monopoly survived into the seventeenth century.[1] It drew its strength from the capital resources of the Seville merchants, seconded by foreign colleagues, first the Genoese and Portuguese, then the French, Dutch and English; from the network of interests which bound together the merchants and shippers of the *consulado* of Seville and the officials of the *Casa de Contratación*, the government body which regulated the trade; from another network, more obscure but no less powerful, between these same merchants and the great territorial magnates of Andalucía, of whom the count duke of Olivares was the most striking representative; and from the slavish devotion to routine of the Spanish bureaucracy which, having devised an effective means of delivering goods to America and receiving silver in return, was content to maintain the apparatus even when circumstances changed and even when foreign interests began to appropriate it.

The doors of American trade were more effectively closed to Spanish nationals than to foreigners. Yet the exclusion of Aragonese and Catalans from the *carrera de Indias* was due less to Castilian prejudice than to the facts of economic life. The peoples of eastern Spain did not have the resources to contribute to trade and colonisation in America; and had they been allowed to do so they might well have become yet further agents of foreign penetration. In any case we have to distinguish between emigration and trade. In law non-Castilians were free to enter America; this was made clear by the decree of 1596 which stated that Aragonese, Catalans and Valencians were

[1] On the monopoly and its organisation see *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 161–8.

not classified as foreigners and could reside in the Indies.[2] In 1619 the ordinances of the *consulado* of Lima, describing the qualifications needed by the guild's thirty electors, specifically included subjects of the crown of Aragon.[3] The great jurist, Juan de Solórzano, writing probably under the influence of the Catalan revolt of 1640, remarked in his *Política Indiana* (1647) that subjects of the crown of Aragon 'appeared' to be classified as foreigners in relation to the Indies; but he also admitted that force of custom allowed them in.[4] The *Recopilación* of 1680, the general coding of the Laws of the Indies, had no such doubts; it simply repeated the decree of 1596. Castile therefore possessed no monopoly of emigration. If few Aragonese and Catalans actually went to America it was for other reasons than legal ones.[5]

Commerce was a different matter. Andalucía was better endowed for transatlantic trade than any other region of Spain.[6] In the early years of colonial enterprise the Catalans showed not the slightest interest in America. Belatedly, in 1522, they requested permission to trade and were refused.[7] But every businessman in Europe knew that you did not need to cross the Atlantic to get your hands on American treasure. All you needed was a foothold in Seville or Cadiz. These ports were as open to Catalans as they were to foreigners, and in the sixteenth century they were to be found there, selling their goods in the transatlantic trade; by mid-century three-quarters of their textile exports to Castile were probably re-exported to the Indies.[8] But eastern Spain could not sustain even this modest effort. Aragon was excluded by its economic recession and stagnation which culminated in the expulsion of the moriscos.[9] Catalonia spent its commercial energies, before and after the revolt of 1640, in attempting to restore its first life-line, the Mediterranean trade. It was not until the last decades of the century that modest economic recovery brought Catalonia within striking distance of transatlantic operations. Its merchants then evinced a new interest in America and advocated the

[2] *Recopilación de leyes de los reinos de las Indias* [1680] (3 vols., Madrid, 1943), IX, xxvii, 28. The law of 1596 simply legitimatised existing practice and echoed similar enactments of 1564 and 1591; see Artíñano, *Historia del comercio con las Indias*, p. 118.

[3] '. . . y no han de ser extranjeros de los Reinos de España, y se entiende no serlo los de la Corona de Aragon . . .'. See R. Konetzke, *Colección de documentos para la historia de la formación social de Hispanoamérica* 1493–1810 (3 vols., Madrid, 1953–62), ii, 294; María E. Rodríguez Vicente, *El tribunal del consulado de Lima en la primera mitad del siglo XVII* (Madrid, 1960), p. 319.

[4] F. Rahola, *Comercio de Cataluña con América en el siglo XVIII* (Barcelona, 1931), p. 13.

[5] C. Bermúdez Plata, *Catálogo de pasageros de Indias durante los siglos XVI, XVII, y XVIII* (2 vols., Seville, 1932–40) gives the official figures for the first few decades, inadequate though they are: in 1509–38 out of a total of 13,399 there were 89 Aragonese, 48 Valencians and 38 Catalans; see J. Rodríguez Argua, 'Las regiones españoles y la población de América (1509–1538)', *Revista de Indias*, viii (1947), 698–748.

[6] *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 160–63.

[7] Carrera Pujal, *Historia política y económica de Cataluña*, i, 298–99, 303–4.

[8] *Ibid.*, i, 321–24; Vilar, *La Catalogne dans l'Espagne moderne*, i, 537.

[9] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, pp. 249–50.

formation of a trading company; and in the first half of the eighteenth century their economic resources enabled them to overcome the law and break into the colonial trade. The Basques, too, sought permission for direct trade with America, especially after the independence of Portugal prevented them from using Lisbon as an entrepôt.[10] But it was 1728 before they proved their point and procured for the Basque-financed Caracas Company the privilege of trading with Venezuela.

Seville's desperate defence of its monopoly in the seventeenth century reflected shift of power as well as depression of opportunity in the transatlantic sector. Seville, of course, had never possessed the entire monopoly. It was an Andalusian monopoly of which Seville was the commercial, financial and administrative centre. Between 1506 and 1650 Seville had 60 per cent. of registered trade to America, and was followed in order of importance by Cadiz, San Lucar de Barrameda, the Canaries and Lisbon.[11] In the course of the seventeenth century, however, Seville suffered an accumulation of adversities which weakened its economy. Its population was ravaged by plague and dropped from a peak of 150,000 in 1588 to 85,000 a century later.[12] Its merchants bore the brunt of royal taxation and forced loans. And its location became a serious liability. For Seville was an inland port, access to which steadily deteriorated in proportion to the heavy increase in tonnage of transatlantic vessels—the average size rose from 70 tons in 1504 to 391 tons in 1641–45. From the early seventeenth century navigation of the Guadalquivir and the bar at San Lucar became increasingly hazardous. Seville's loss was Cadiz's gain. As a sea port Cadiz was more accessible and more successful in procuring foreign vessels at a time, especially from the 1630's, when Indies shipping, like its contents, ceased to be Spanish.[13] Cadiz, moreover, was preferred by foreigners who wished to evade the administration in Seville and found the bay of Cadiz more suitable for contraband than the riverine port. Finally, Cadiz had advantageous customs rates, as its customs lessees purposely sought to attract foreign merchants to their constituency. By 1650 Cadiz had successfully challenged the supremacy of its rival, and in the second half of the century its victory was complete. As trade moved towards Cadiz so did people: its population grew from some 2,000 in 1600 to 40,000 by 1700.[14]

The rivalry between Seville and Cadiz in the seventeenth century was symptomatic of the growing crisis in the Indies trade. The days of peace and

[10] Guiard Larrauri, *Historia del Consulado y Casa de Contratación de Bilbao*, i, 445–50.
[11] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, pp. 228–33.
[12] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 140–42.
[13] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, pp. 294–329; Domínguez Ortiz, *Orto y ocaso de Sevilla*, p. 89.
[14] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 142–43.

plenty were over, and the remnants of prosperity were bitterly contested. The crown too fought for its share of dwindling returns, with the advantage that it could make its own rules.

2. Fraud: the Response to Taxation

A monopoly trade was an easy trade to tax. All traffic between Spain and America was subject to registration, and the outgoing register was checked at destination. Taxation was directed at the trade itself and at the colonial economies. On the former there were two major impositions, the *avería* and the *almojarifazgo*.

The *avería*, an *ad valorem* duty charged through the register, was paid by the trade to procure its own defence. It was therefore governed by two factors, the cost of defence and the value of cargo, and it varied from year to year according to the size of the fleets and of their escorts.[15] From 1562 the *avería* was let out by contract to the *consulado* of Seville; it eventually became a millstone round its neck. Enemy attack, or more often simply threat of attack, forced the convoys to increase their naval escorts, especially from 1621 when the Dutch mounted a new offensive. The gross tonnage of the escorting *armadas* increased from 20,128 tons in 1601–5 to 30,362 in 1636–40; it then plunged to 16,575 in 1640–45, to 16,560 in 1646–50.[16] During the crisis years of 1620–30 the tonnage of the *armada de la guardia* amounted to 17 per cent. of the total tonnage of the fleets, compared with 12 per cent. in 1601–10. The *avería* thus became a tax which devoured the trade it was designed to defend. The rising cost of defence, of naval stores and of shipbuilding, coincided from 1608 with the contraction and depression of transatlantic trade. As defence costs rose and the trade became less capable of meeting them, merchants took refuge in fraud, and the *avería* disintegrated. Fraud was less a cause than a consequence of crisis. For the *avería* penalised those who obeyed the law. Spanish merchants suffered in relation to foreign contrabandists who shipped their goods on the fleets unregistered and untaxed. Inevitably Spanish merchants too sought to save their returns from a diminishing trade by evasion and fraud. The development of fraud further restricted the taxable material, reduced the yield of the *avería*, weakened the escorting *armadas*, and invited further enemy attack. This was the vicious circle in which the transatlantic trade was entrapped. Between 1602 and 1630 the *avería* was levied at the rate of 6 per cent.; in 1631 it rose to 35 per cent., clear evidence of the absolute fraud which killed the system. Although the *consulado*

[15] Guillermo Céspedes del Castillo, *La avería en el comercio de Indias* (Seville, 1945); Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, i, 169–237.
[16] *Ibid.*, i, 204; vi, tables 183–84.

renewed the contract on various occasions up to 1628, in fact it cut down on effective defence and used the *armadas* as merchant vessels. Between 1628 and 1660 the *ad valorem* duty was gradually abandoned; from 1641 the *consulado* refused to renew the contract; the state had now to administer the *avería* itself, make good its deficiency, and in effect subsidise defence of the trade.

The *almojarifazgo* was an *ad valorem* customs duty charged on merchandise at Spanish and American ports. Up to 1660 total customs on outbound traffic (exit and entry) amounted to 15 per cent., on the eastbound trade 17½ per cent.[17] The duties exacted in America were based on prices in the American market. Merchandise shipped from Spain to Peru, for example, paid *almojarifazgo* first on appraised value at Portobello, and on arrival at Callao 5 per cent. of the increase in value which had accrued in transit from the isthmus. This rule held good for all the Indies, covering European commodities reshipped from one colonial port to another. Some commodities received special fiscal attention. By 1616 cochineal imported into Spain was taxed at 50 ducats an *arroba*, its selling price being 126 ducats. Taxation on this scale simply diverted the trade into contraband: registered imports of cochineal fell from 7,673 *arrobas* in 1607, to 2,000 in 1614, to 859 in 1615, though it was known that in the latter year 4,000 *arrobas* left New Spain alone.[18]

The colonial economies themselves were subject to a variety of taxes, the *quinto* (the royal fifth on bullion), proceeds of the sale of mercury, Indian tributes (a personal assessment of 6 pesos), the *cruzada*, and the *alcabala*. Out of these the treasuries of Mexico and Peru had to defray local administrative and defence costs, subsidise their dependent colonies, and remit the surplus to Spain. At the end of the sixteenth century the surplus from Mexico amounted to about 1 million pesos a year, a peak from which it subsequently fell; Peru provided greater returns, for its superior silver production yielded a greater *quinto*.[19] To supplement this revenue the crown levied various extraordinary taxes. One of these was the Union of Arms imposed in 1627 as part of Olivares's call for assistance from all provinces. America was assessed at 600,000 ducats a year for fifteen years, 250,000 from New Spain and 350,000 from Peru, on the understanding that it would be applied to naval defence of the transatlantic route. The contribution was raised by doubling the *alcabala* from 2 to 4 per cent., and it was subsequently renewed so that it became a permanent tax with little relevance to its declared object.[20]

[17] C. H. Haring, *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies in the time of the Hapsburgs* (Cambridge, Mass., 1918), pp. 83–86.

[18] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, iv, 571–72.

[19] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, xiii (1956), 314.

[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 317–19.

Further sums were raised from loans and *donativos* (voluntary gifts), often overtly for imperial defence but invariably diverted to expenditure in Europe. Between 1613 and 1655 the *consulado* of Lima raised 277,000 pesos in *donativos*.[21] But they were bargains rather than gifts. While colonial merchants rarely got the naval defence they were promised, they received other valuable concessions, such as 'pardons' for past fraud and above all honours and titles of nobility. The *donativo* was one of the ways by which colonial merchants improved their social status. Another means of acquiring security and respectability was by purchase of office. This too the crown exploited as a money-raising device; sale of office had been practised in the sixteenth century, but in the reign of Philip IV, especially in the 1640's and 1650's, it acquired new dimensions, and was extended to financial and judicial offices, with pernicious results.[22]

By extending imperial taxation the crown sought to squeeze the last drops from an empire whose mineral wealth was either drying up or being diverted to other channels. In spite of increased fiscal pressure the crown's revenue from America fell from about 2 million pesos a year in the reign of Philip III to 1 million a year and less in the reign of Philip IV. To counter the downward trend the crown resorted increasingly to a last desperate expedient, confiscation of private bullion returns. Silver sent from Mexico and Peru to pay for last year's merchandise and gain credit for the next was taken over by the crown, and merchants were compensated in vellon currency or in *juros* at 10 per cent., later reduced to 6·3 per cent. In 1620 Philip III took one-eighth of registered private treasure. Philip IV took much more—in 1629 1 million ducats, in 1635–37 2 million ducats (forcibly exchanged for vellon), in 1637–38 500,000 ducats, in the 1640's varying amounts culminating in 1 million ducats in 1649.[23] This was the most harmful of all fiscal devices. Its immediate effect was to deprive the trade of vital capital, for merchants reacted by consigning less bullion in the following year. They were also driven to large-scale fraud to protect their investments. The combined result of withdrawal and fraud was to reduce registered trade to the point where the crown's own customs revenue was seriously damaged. But the greatest victim was the *avería*, which was assessed on registered returns. As the latter decreased, the *avería* rate increased and became a further incitement to fraud; the time came when the crown had to subsidise the *avería* in order to maintain a semblance of transatlantic defence. By its new folly,

[21] Rodríguez Vicente, *El tribunal del consulado de Lima*, pp. 144–47.

[22] J. H. Parry, *The Sale of Public Office in the Spanish Indies under the Habsburgs* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1953), pp. 48–58.

[23] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *op. cit.*, pp. 342–52; Rodríguez Vicente, *El tribunal del consulado de Lima*, pp. 149–50.

therefore, the crown not only undermined long-term confidence and investment in the Indies trade but also subverted its own financial position. The consequences were most apparent in the 1640's. In 1642, with the connivance of the fleets' commanders, the greater part of private silver returns was not declared, thus evading not only confiscation but also the *avería* and other taxes.[24] The Council of the Indies regarded confiscation of private treasure as one of the greatest abuses afflicting the transatlantic trade, and it recommended in 1643 'that on no account and for no reason should Your Majesty lay hands on private silver consignments from the Indies, but should give orders that in future when the fleets arrive from Peru and New Spain their consignments should be immediately handed to their owners'. The crown remained unrepentant. In 1649 it confiscated 1 million pesos of private returns. At the beginning of 1652 government agents descended on Seville to compute sequestrations in advance of the fleets, and in addition to buy up merchandise (tobacco, cochineal and indigo) then held by the merchants of Seville at imposed prices and in vellon for immediate shipment to Flanders.[25] This was the last straw. In the face of acute resentment and opposition the government was forced to cancel the projected confiscation, and indeed made no more. But by now it was too late; the habit of fraud was too deeply engrained and the trade too depressed to respond to official reform.

The crown was not the only parasite on the American trade and colonies. The wealth of the New World was regarded as fair game by hordes of place and pension seekers, many of whom had never crossed the Atlantic. *Mercedes* to courtiers and favourites, pensions to widows and orphans, dowries to ladies-in-waiting, grants of various kinds were frequently charged on the colonial treasuries, especially in the second half of the seventeenth century. Many *mercedes* were granted on *indios vacos*, that is on *encomiendas* (grants of Indians who paid tribute in labour and/or money) which had fallen vacant. Viceroys and colonists protested in vain that *encomiendas* which should have been reserved for descendants of the conquerors were going instead to people who had never left Castile. Some of these *encomiendas* were granted in anticipation of their becoming vacant and meanwhile the grants were charged on the colonial treasuries. The recipients were usually courtiers and higher nobility. A few examples will suffice.[26] To doña Leonor Moscoso on the occasion of her marriage in 1653 a grant of 3,000 ducats a year on a vacant *encomienda*, valid for two lives; to Juan de Palafox y Cardona, son of the marquis of Ariza and nephew of bishop Palafox, 2,000 ducats a year on vacant *encomiendas* in Guatemala; to doña Antonia de Mendoza, countess of

[24] Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *op. cit.*, p. 362.
[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 370–72.
[26] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 246–47.

Benavente and lady-in-waiting to the Infanta, 6,000 ducats in 1665 on vacant *encomiendas*; to doña Antonia María de Toledo, widow of the count of Priego, 2,000 ducats in 1666 on vacant *encomiendas* to improve her financial position. Many a wretched Indian scraping a living in the Peruvian *sierra* was working in fact for distressed gentlefolk in Castile.

Plunder and parasitism made fraud and contraband a way of life. The monopoly system and high prices induced market conditions propitious for contraband; taxes and confiscations incited it; impecunious officials connived at it; naval authorities co-operated in it. The close alliance between the merchants of Seville and officials of the *Casa de Contratación* made customs control one of the weakest points of the monopoly.[27] Contents of merchandise were assessed at their declared not their verified value, and volume was declared in general categories; naturally they were falsely declared and undervalued in order to evade customs.[28] On the outward voyage the object was to avoid displaying the Seville register at the port of entry in the Indies, on the return voyage to avoid registration on leaving the Indies so that there would be no check on the accuracy of declarations at Seville. Both ways meant underpayment of taxes. Another device was to use the warship escorts for merchandise and thus avoid registration altogether, in connivance with the naval commanders who might also permit vessels to unload at unauthorised ports.

Contraband in silver returns from the Indies was also highly developed and took two main forms, evasion of the royal *quinto* at the mining base, and evasion of registration at port. Again, the methods were various, ranging from suborning ships' captains, to declaring ingots under their real weight, to loading at the last minute and thus avoiding close inspection. A favoured device in Peru was to consign registered silver to non-existent persons in Panama, where the consignment nominally remained and was marked off the register; this silver would then be transferred across the isthmus to the fleet waiting in Portobello for the return journey to Spain. The object of fraud in silver consignments was not merely to avoid paying the *avería*, but also to have free silver to trade with, for this was a much more valuable trading commodity than registered silver. In the first place it was not in danger of confiscation; secondly it was easier to re-export abroad from Spain to buy the foreign goods so much in demand in the Indies trade. At Portobello Spanish merchants would lower the prices of their goods by 10 or 15 per cent. in order to get their hands on unregistered silver.[29] There is, of course, no way of measuring the volume of contraband; but in 1651 a

[27] See *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 164–5.
[28] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, i, 88–121.
[29] Rodríguez Vicente, *El tribunal del consulado de Lima*, pp. 262–63.

Peruvian estimate, for what it is worth, claimed that 25 per cent. of the silver shipped from Callao was unregistered.[30] In any case fraud was not constant throughout the history of the Indies trade: it increased from 1590 and even more from 1620.[31] This makes it difficult to estimate accurately silver returns from America, public and private.

Total treasure receipts dropped from the peak of 35·1 million pesos in 1591–95, to 34·4 million in 1596–1600, to 24·4 million in 1601–5.[32] Then followed a period of fluctuation, an upswing to 31·4 million pesos in 1606–10, down to 24·5 million in 1611–15, and up again to 30·1 million in 1616–20. After this date receipts diminished irretrievably, from 27 million pesos in 1621–25, to 11·7 million in 1646–50, to 3·3 million in 1656–60. There was therefore a marked recession in the period 1601–30, and a precipitate drop in 1631–60. Crown receipts began to fall earlier and continued to fall more quickly than private receipts. From the peak of 10·9 million pesos in 1596–1600, they fell to 6·5 million in 1601–5, rose to 8·5 million in 1606–10, and fell again to 7·2 million in 1611–15. From that date they fell disastrously, to 4·3 million pesos in 1616–20, maintaining themselves at about that level until 1646–50 when they fell to 1·6 million; after a slight rise to 2·2 million in 1651–55, they collapsed to 606,524 pesos in 1655–60.

What were the causes of the decrease in American treasure? Economic depression, or shift, in the colonies between the late sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries lowered their returns to the metropolis.[33] The fall in the Indian population reduced the yield of *encomiendas* and of silver mines and made Mexico in particular much less profitable to Spain. Moreover the colonies were absorbing more of their own revenue in administrative and defence costs; appropriations for garrisons, fortifications and naval forces progressively reduced public returns to the crown. Enemy action accounted for very few losses among the treasure fleets; but the convoys always needed escorts, and the mere threat of attack was enough to swell defence expenditure, raise the *avería* and thus augment fraud. These were the reasons why the actual amount of royal treasure from the Indies rarely equalled its reputation. It never represented more than one-tenth of Philip IV's total revenue, and in many years not even one-twentieth. But this income had an importance beyond its quantity. The very fact that it was a fortuitous income, both in the date of its arrival and in its volume, prevented it from suffering the fate of other royal revenues which were assigned in advance to bankers and *juristas*

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 259.
[31] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 1, p. 398.
[32] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 34–38; these are official figures based on registered imports; they do not account for treasure which evaded control at the mining centres, for unregistered treasure, for treasure which financed the trans-Pacific trade.
[33] See below, pp. 217–18, 222–31, 242–44.

and permanently lost to the treasury. When it arrived it was ready cash, immediately available for use; and in a period of debased currency an income in silver was particularly valuable to the crown for its overseas payments and to businessmen for foreign trade. If the silver fleets were delayed the premium on silver soared, foreign trade was hit, and supplies for the armed forces abroad were unobtainable.

While much bullion escaped official channels before it could reach Spain, much also was syphoned off after it arrived. Although the export of bullion was prohibited by law, the law was ignored, because the Spanish market and the Indies trade itself needed foreign manufactures. The amount of bullion smuggled out of Spain is a matter of speculation. Between 10 and 30 per cent. of *registered* bullion, which was supposed to be transferred directly from the fleets to the *Casa de Contratación* before being distributed to its owners, in fact left Spain illegally.[34] Unregistered bullion, of course, was designed precisely for smuggling. Professional smugglers, the *metedores*, acting on behalf of the owners, took it from the Indies fleets and loaded it on the foreign ships waiting in Cadiz bay to convey it northwards.[35] Unable to prevent the loss of bullion the Spanish government sought to compensate itself by selling *indultos*, or pardons, to those who admitted to bullion frauds. The proceeds from *indultos*, however, did not satisfy the government's own need for precious metals in an age of rising defence expenditure and falling silver returns. It was at this point that it reached out to take possession of private silver consignments, and thus completed the vicious circle of further fraud and loss of revenue.

3. Foreign Penetration

Foreigners had two ways of penetrating the Indies trade and appropriating its returns. They could sell their merchandise by contraband, either in Seville–Cadiz or in the Indies themselves; or they could actually settle in the Indies. By law emigrants had to be Spaniards or naturalised Spaniards, and they had to have a licence. By decree of November 1607 ships' captains were threatened with the death penalty and generals and admirals of fleets with loss of rank if they carried unlicensed passengers. By the 1670's, however, the punishment had been reduced to a fine and the order was widely disregarded.[36] Forging passports was a profession in Seville. Foreigners travelled on the official fleets, or they entered by the back door, the Río de la Plata. In Peru three groups could be identified. A number of foreigners had settled in the

[34] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, p. 37.
[35] Haring, *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies*, p. 112.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 103.

interior and acquired modest property holdings. Others were to be found in maritime occupations, as pilots and seamen, profiting from the shortage of skilled personnel; in 1619 foreigners—Italians, Frenchmen, and above all Portuguese—were owners and in many cases masters of eighteen vessels in the Peruvian merchant marine.[37] But the biggest group were merchants, officially transient but in fact resident, in the ports and towns. By 1630 the Portuguese dominated the retail trade of Lima. Others were active in the transatlantic trade itself, using Spanish agents as front men as was done in Seville; they had contacts with contrabandists in Andalucía who exported goods without paying duties and undersold their rivals. Following its normal practice the Spanish crown taxed what it could not prevent: foreigners were granted permission to trade if they had twenty years' residence in Peru, were married to a Peruvian, had property valued at not less than 4,000 ducats, and paid a composition tax to the crown.[38] The Portuguese also favoured Cartagena, an important staging post in the Indies trade. So numerous did they become there after 1610 that they even acquired administrative offices; they also received the attentions of the Inquisition, for they included a number of Jews, and from 1640 of course they were harassed and in some cases expelled.[39]

It was common knowledge, however, that a foreign merchant could tap the American trade without going to America; he could concentrate on its metropolitan base in Andalucía. Here too the law was explicit enough. To engage in transatlantic commerce a merchant had to be a native Spaniard; this precluded foreigners from trading with the colonies either on their own account or through Spanish intermediaries.[40] But the law could be evaded, either by simple contraband, or by use of Spanish cover-men, or by acquiring naturalisation. The latter gave the greatest security, but there were certain legal requirements: the successful applicant had to have twenty years' residence in Spain, at least ten of them in a furnished house, he had to be married to a Spanish wife, and he had to possess at least 4,000 ducats' worth of property. More and more foreigners began to take advantage of naturalisation. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century only 25 foreigners acquired naturalisation rights to trade with the Indies—17 Portuguese, 5 Flemings and 3 French.[41] During the reign of Philip III (1598–1621) the number rose to 59, comprising 21 Flemings, 17 Portuguese, 11 Italians, 4 French and, among the

[37] Rodríguez Vicente, *El tribunal del consulado de Lima*, p. 71.
[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 73–74.
[39] Manuel Tejardo Fernández, *Aspectos de la vida social en Cartagena de Indias durante el seiscientos* (Seville, 1954). On the Portuguese in Mexico, see above, pp. 121–2.
[40] Haring, *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies*, pp. 107–8.
[41] A. Domínguez Ortiz, 'La concesión de "naturalezas para comerciar en Indias" durante el siglo XVII', *Revista de Indias*, xix (1959), 227–39.

small groups, one Englishman. In the first decade of Philip IV's reign naturalisation rights for trade with the Indies were given even more liberally: between 1621 and 1630 there were 77 successful applicants. Many of these did not possess the legal qualifications, but they made up for this by handsome payments to the crown; in effect the crown sold certificates of naturalisation, again making money out of lawbreakers. The scale on which Philip IV's government issued certificates caused such resentment among Spanish merchants and their allies in the *Casa de Contratación* that the policy was strongly attacked in the 1630's and 1640's.[42] For the growing demand from foreign merchants was essentially an attempt to eliminate Spanish intermediaries in order to sell direct to the Indies from their own merchant houses in Andalucía. Under pressure from monopolist interests in Seville the crown began to tighten up on eligibility from about 1645. Later in the century, however, particularly from the early 1680's, naturalisation policy was again relaxed. By the end of the century the majority of the merchant aristocracy of Cadiz, with legal status in the Indies trade, consisted of foreigners, without counting the many foreigners who traded through Spanish intermediaries.[43]

The use of intermediaries was well developed. They are often called mere commission agents, and perhaps some of them were, passing foreign goods through inspection and registration, loading them under their own name, and watching the returns going direct to the owner.[44] But some of them were more than agents. They were part of the triangular trade between Europe, Andalucía and the Indies. The foreigners brought their manufactures to Andalucía and there they bought Andalusian products, wine, oil and fruits. This left the Spaniards with a large trade gap which had to be bridged by the Indies trade. Many Seville merchants shipped to America on their own account Spanish and foreign goods, and from the returns they balanced their foreign payments, making very good profits, or commissions, from all these transactions. In the course of the seventeenth century it became less necessary for foreigners to use the official channels as more of the actual loading and unloading of the fleets was transferred from Seville to Cadiz and its satellite ports.[45] Here, away from the immediate surveillance of the *Casa de Contratación*, the *metedores* could load merchandise direct from foreign vessels on to the fleets after the last inspection had been completed.[46] Foreign merchants could thus escape registration, customs duties and the *avería*, and undersell their Spanish competitors in the American market. So Spaniards too had to

[42] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, v, 413.
[43] Raimundo Lantery, *Memorias de Raimundo de Lantery, mercader de Indias en Cádiz, 1673–1700*. Publicalas Alvaro Ricardo y Gómez (Cadiz, 1949).
[44] Girard, *Le commerce français a Séville et Cadix au temps des Habsbourgs*, p. 87.
[45] See above, p. 176.
[46] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, iv, 536; v, 368.

smuggle to survive. The government reacted by applying its classic seventeenth-century formula: it sanctioned lawbreaking and taxed the offenders; foreigners were included in the sequestrations imposed on Andalusian merchants and in the fines levied for past frauds.

Foreigners supplied not only merchandise for the American trade but also capital and shipping. As the Dutch, the French and the English came to earn increasing returns from the Indies, they also began to plough back some of their profits. In the first half of the seventeenth century the trade did not depend entirely on foreign capital; it also received large injections of American capital. But its dependence on foreigners was enough to alarm some Spanish merchants. At the prompting of the *consulado* of Seville the crown issued a decree in 1608 prohibiting foreign merchants from selling their goods on credit to Spanish shippers against payment in the Indies.[47] But this decree, like many others, was a mere formality. As Spanish merchants rarely possessed sufficient capital for their purchases they were forced to rely on a degree of foreign finance to keep the trade going.

The law closed the Indies trade not only to foreigners but also to foreign shipping. But again what the law forbad conditions encouraged. The growing impoverishment of the Spanish merchant marine forced the government to accept the need for foreign vessels in the Indies trade. It tried to insist that these should be owned by Spaniards and should carry Spanish crews.[48] But in the reign of Philip IV, especially from the 1630's, even this became a formality; the government had to allow the hiring of foreign-owned vessels and to accept the fact that their crews contained aliens as well as Spaniards.[49] The freighting of foreign vessels, of course, increased the opportunities of fraud; it was also resented by the owners and builders of Spanish ships. Under their pressure foreign-built ships were excluded from the Indies trade by decree of July 1642. The decree, which was intended to stimulate Spanish shipbuilding, simply revived previous prohibitions; the only difference was that the condition of the Spanish shipbuilding industry in the 1640's made its application even less likely than before.[50] In any case foreign vessels were particularly vital for carrying specialised cargoes such as naval stores, for which there was constant demand from Spain's other competitors, the shipyards of the New World. In the circumstances the most that the *Casa de Contratación* could do was to give preference to Spanish vessels when they were available.

The extent of foreign penetration of the American trade is impossible to

[47] *Ibid.*, iv, 393.

[48] Girard, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

[49] On the number and origin of foreign vessels see Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, v, 342, 364, 390, 404–8, 432–37.

[50] Haring, *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies*, pp. 258–61; see above, pp. 162–5.

compute, granted its devious ways.[51] In 1628 the *consulado* of Seville—an interested party prone to exaggeration—explained to the government that the Indies trade needed each year more than 6 million ducats' worth of foreign goods; American and Spanish products sold in return covered barely half of this; it was therefore impossible to comply with a recent decree insisting that foreign payments should be met entirely by merchandise and not by bullion.

> Foreign imports to the value of even 6 million ducats are barely adequate to satisfy demand; shortage and high prices are notorious, especially in woollen goods. . . . The New Spain fleet which sailed from Cadiz on 15 July this year is a good example. Its cargo would have been confined to wines, had not the French vessels arrived in time with their merchandise; and although they provided cloth it was only half the amount required by New Spain. It is to be feared that if the Indies are not supplied in the normal way then our enemies will supply them illegally and the colonists will admit them out of necessity.[52]

Throughout most of the seventeenth century relations between foreign merchants and the Indies trade were regulated more or less by the free play of supply and demand.[53] Most foreigners found conditions in Andalucía suitable for their operations. But some, as the *consulado* of Seville implied, were tempted to tap the wealth of the Indies nearer its source, in the Caribbean and the Pacific.

4. Imperial Defence: the Atlantic

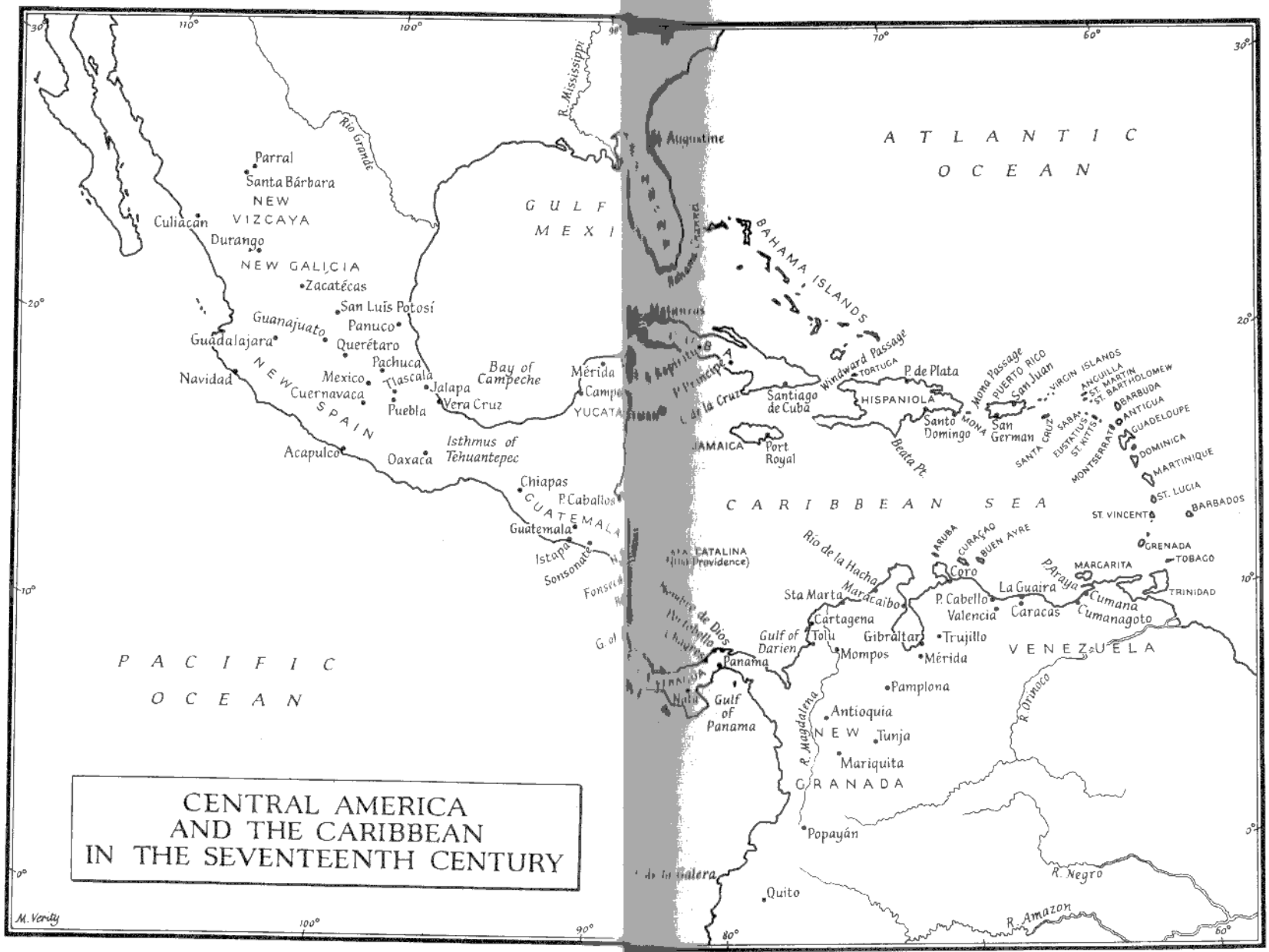
In the course of the sixteenth century Spanish seamen perfected the technique of maintaining regular communications between Andalucía and America by means of two large fleets a year, each sailing in convoy, one to Tierra Firme, the other to New Spain.[54] They sailed from Cadiz or San Lucar, the New Spain fleet in May (if it was ready) and the Tierra Firme fleet in August. First they headed southwest to the coast of Africa and then proceeded to the Canaries; from the Canaries the route was west by southwest until they caught the trade winds which took them due west to Deseada or one of the other Leeward islands. From there the *galeones*, as the Tierra

[51] Some of it moreover was based on the Portuguese trade to Brazil and its re-export through the Río de la Plata.

[52] Quoted by Domínguez Ortiz, 'Guerra económica y comercio extranjero en el reinado de Felipe IV', *Hispania*, xxiii (1963), 92–93; the decree in fact was suspended.

[53] On foreign participation in the late seventeenth century see below, pp. 208–9.

[54] There are two classical 'institutional' accounts of the *carrera*, both valuable repositories of source material: José de Veitia Linaje, *Norte de la contratación de las Indias Occidentales* [1672] (Buenos Aires, 1945) by a treasurer of the *Casa de Contratación*; Rafael Antúñez y Acevedo, *Memorias históricas sobre la legislación y gobierno del comercio de los españoles con sus colonias en las Indias Occidentales* (Madrid, 1797).


CENTRAL AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN
IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
M. Verity
PACIFIC
OCEAN
ATLANTIC
OCEAN
CARIBBEAN SEA
GULF
MEXI
NEW
VIZCAYA
NEW GALICIA
NEW
SPAIN
YUCATA
GUATEMALA
NEW
GRANADA
VENEZUELA
Parral
Santa Bárbara
Culiacan
Durango
Zacatécas
San Luis Potosí
Guanajuato
Panuco
Guadalajara
Querétaro
Pachuca
Navidad
Mexico
Tlascala
Jalapa
Vera Cruz
Cuernavaca
Puebla
Acapulco
Oaxaca
Isthmus of
Tehuantepec
Bay of
Campeche
Mérida
Campe
Chiapas
P. Caballos
Guatemala
Istapa
Sonsonate
Rio Grande
R. Mississippi
Augustine
BAHAMA ISLANDS
Windward Passage
TORTUGA
P. de Plata
Mona Passage
PUERTO RICO
San Juan
VIRGIN ISLANDS
ANGUILLA
ST. MARTIN
ST. BARTHOLOMEW
BARBUDA
ANTIGUA
GUADELOUPE
DOMINICA
MARTINIQUE
ST. LUCIA
BARBADOS
ST. VINCENT
GRENADA
TOBAGO
TRINIDAD
MARGARITA
HISPANIOLA
Santiago
de Cuba
Santo
Domingo
MONA
San
German
SANTA CRUZ
SABA
EUSTATIUS
ST. KITTS
MONTSERRAT
JAMAICA
Port
Royal
Beata Pt.
ARUBA
CURAÇAO
BUEN AYRE
Coro
La Guaira
Caracas
P. Cabello
Valencia
Cumana
Cumanagoto
Araya
Rio de la Hacha
Sta Marta
Maracaibo
Cartagena
Tolu
Gibraltar
Trujillo
Mompos
Mérida
Pamplona
Antioquia
Tunja
Mariquita
Popayán
Quito
Gulf of
Darien
Gulf
of
Panama
Panama
Nombre de Dios
R. Magdalena
R. Orinoco
R. Negro
R. Amazon
Fonseca
G. de la Galera
80°
90°
100°
110°
70°
60°
30°
20°
10°
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Firme fleet was called, steered southwest to Cartagena and Portobello (4,300 miles and 8 weeks from Cadiz), while the *flota* took a northwesterly direction to Hispaniola, Cuba, and Vera Cruz (4,860 miles from Cadiz). The return course for Spain was via Cuba and through the Bahama channel, the most dangerous passage of the whole voyage; having negotiated its hurricanes and reefs, the fleets headed northeast to pick up strong northerly winds, then east to the Azores and so to San Lucar.[55]

Predictable though the route was, the fleets suffered few losses from enemy action. They drew strength from the convoy system; the merchantmen carried armament; and they had their naval escort, usually eight galleons for the Tierra Firme fleet (the famous *armada de la guardia de la carrera de las Indias*) and two for the Mexican. These defences may not have been completely adequate, but the enemy could rarely assemble anything more powerful. In September 1628 a numerically superior Dutch fleet—31 vessels, 700 cannon, 3,000 men—attacked the Mexican *flota* of some 20 vessels off Matanzas in Cuba, destroyed it and took its enormous treasure, some 6 million pesos according to the Dutch. This disaster was due in part to an unwonted failure of intelligence about the enemy's movements, but above all to failure of leadership; the Spanish commander, General Juan de Benavides, paid for his negligence on the gallows.[56] In 1656 an English squadron from Blake's fleet took the *capitana* and another galleon of the Tierra Firme fleet as it approached Cadiz, capturing some 2 million pesos. The English then sought out the Mexican fleet which had taken refuge in the Canaries; there, in April 1657, they almost completely destroyed it, and the Spaniards managed to save only a portion of its treasure.

These were the only major disasters to the *carrera de Indias* at the hands of enemies. The fleets suffered much more from the elements. Harassed by the close schedule of the turn-round, delays to trade and silver supplies, the expense of wintering in the Indies, and a government impatient for its bullion, fleet commanders often took excessive risks in sailing out of season. In 1622 five merchantmen and three galleons of the Tierra Firme fleet sank in storms with heavy loss of treasure. In 1624 the same fleet lost three galleons through shipwreck, with 433,770 ducats of the crown's silver and 1 million belonging to private merchants. In 1631 the New Spain fleet left Veracruz late in the season and was struck by hurricane off the coast of Yucatán; the *almiranta* went down with all its silver, and most of the merchantmen were sunk or ran aground, a disaster which Olivares lamented as 'beyond words'.[57] In 1641 the New Spain fleet, again sailing late in the

[55] Haring, *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies*, pp. 201–30.
[56] Fernández Duro, *Armada española*, iv, 97–106.
[57] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, p. 283.

season, was devastated by hurricane on leaving the Bahama channel; the *almiranta* made its way to Santo Domingo where it sank; and the *capitana*, having survived the crossing, went down at the bar of San Lucar; between them they lost 770,000 pesos for the king and 1,070,000 for merchants, though most of the *capitana*'s cargo was subsequently salvaged.[58]

The activities of pirates and privateers were puny compared to hurricanes in the Bahama strait. An international pirate community infested the Caribbean from bases like Tortuga, attacking local trade and pouncing on undefended Spanish settlements. But these were petty operations, even after their increase from the early seventeenth century. Nor was privateering particularly successful, confined as it was to the less prosperous and less defended parts of the Spanish empire. The returns from English privateering were so low that they hardly covered investment. Englishmen preferred contraband to privateering, though even this was second in importance to trade with Seville. From about 1625, however, the French, English and Dutch came to the lesser Antilles as settlers as well as interlopers, trading with Venezuela and the offshore islands, selling cloth and Negroes against tobacco and cacao, and syphoning off much of the local trade.[59]

The opportunities for contraband trade in the Caribbean, called by the Spaniards *rescate*, were becoming more numerous. Constant surveillance of the whole area was out of the question. The fleet system was geared to the supply of large markets in Mexico and Peru. Smaller settlements remote from the main routes were starved of trade. They were allowed *permiso* vessels which detached themselves from the fleets and made their way unescorted to a few ports of call; but these single vessels were favourite targets of corsairs and they tended to be withdrawn. Jamaica was one of the victims of such neglect; direct links between the island and Spain had virtually ceased by 1634, twenty years before its loss to England.[60] Settlements like Jamaica and Venezuela were also low on the list of Spanish defence priorities, preference being given to Hispaniola and Cuba which had greater strategic importance. The poor relations of the Indies trade were thus extremely vulnerable to commercial penetration by foreigners and less amenable to Spanish trade on the rare occasions when it arrived. The main zone of contraband was the coast of Tierra Firme from Trinidad to Maracaibo.[61] Here the economy was based on tobacco and cacao; as these had insufficient outlet in the annual fleets the trade fell into the hands of foreigners, the English, Dutch and Portuguese, who also supplied the Negro slaves needed on the

[58] Artiñano, *Historia del comercio con las Indias*, p. 346.
[59] Haring, *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies*, pp. 118–22.
[60] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, p. 570; see also Francisco Morales Padrón, *La Jamaica Española* (Seville, 1952).
[61] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, p. 626.

coastal plantations. This trade, of course, was on the periphery of the Spanish empire and it did not tap the major sources of wealth, Mexico and Peru. But it was yet another breach of the monopoly, and it was conducted from bases which threatened Spain's imperial communications.

The foreign colonies which proliferated in the lesser Antilles from 1625 were dangerously close to the route by which the fleets entered the Caribbean. Even more dangerous were the English settlements in the islands of Santa Catalina and Tortuga. This movement towards the heart of the Spanish empire, closer to the routes of returning silver fleets, was regarded as a grave threat to security. No power could possibly have provided military and naval defence for every part of this vast empire. Spain's first reaction to foreign aggression, therefore, was to establish an order of priorities, abandoning those settlements regarded as of little value and concentrating defence on Mexico and Peru and on the staging posts thereto. This might be called a strategic withdrawal, first from the lesser Antilles, later from Jamaica. It was a rational enough policy and in pursuing it Spain lost nothing of value. She also devised certain substitutes for defence. Occasionally the warships escorting the trade fleets were diverted from convoy duty to eject foreign intruders. In 1629 the galleons of don Fadrique de Toledo were used to expel English and French settlers from the islands of Nevis and St. Kitts.[62] The risk attached to these operations—the fleets were left exposed—meant that they were confined to those foreign bases which were potential threats to the main trade routes and ports. One of these was the Dutch stronghold of St. Martin which was cleared in 1633. Another was Santa Catalina, occupied by the English from 1630 and called by them Providence; after the failure of two small expeditions from Cartagena in 1635 and 1640, the galleons of don Francisco Díaz Pimenta overcame the settlers in 1641 and left a Spanish garrison.[63] Finally, as a substitute for defence from the metropolis, the colonies themselves were encouraged to take the initiative. Their resources were usually adequate for immediate self-defence: the Dutch were repulsed at Puerto Rico in 1626, the English at Santo Domingo in 1654. But they were incapable of taking the offensive against intruders.[64] An expedition from Santo Domingo cleared the island of Tortuga in 1635, but the English and French soon returned, as they had already returned to St. Kitts. These mopping-up operations did not succeed in stemming the tide. A permanent naval force was needed. This was recognised by the metropolis, though the latter short-sightedly preferred to channel resources to northern Europe.

[62] Fernández Duro, *op. cit.*, iv, 109.

[63] D. Rowland, 'Spanish Occupation of the Island of Old Providence or Santa Catalina, 1641–70', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, xv (1935), 298–312; Fernández Duro, *op. cit.*, iv, 338.

[64] R. D. Hussey, 'Spanish Reaction to Foreign Aggression in the Caribbean to about 1680', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, ix (1929), 286–302.

At the eastern end of the transatlantic route defence was provided by the *Armada del Mar Océano* which operated out of home waters, protecting the Atlantic approaches for the returning fleets and performing general defence duties in western Europe. Its strength fluctuated considerably: in the early 1620's it consisted of 46 vessels, but it gradually diminished in the course of the century and by the last decade it was down to about 20. For Caribbean defence there were sporadic attempts to maintain an *Armada de Barlovento*, or Windward Squadron, charged on the colonial treasuries.[65] This was first dispatched—six frigates and other craft—in 1598, but it was soon diverted to convoy duty; from 1606 it was kept in Spanish waters and the money provided by the colonies for its maintenance was absorbed in European expenditure. In 1640, after five years' discussion, a new *Armada de Barlovento* consisting of eight galleons was assigned to anti-corsair operations and escort duties in the Caribbean.[66] In 1641 it escorted the New Spain fleet from Havana to Vera Cruz, back to Havana and from there to the Bahama channel. Again, however, it was soon diverted to transatlantic convoy duty: in 1643 it escorted the New Spain fleet from Vera Cruz to Spain, and also provided the escort for its outward voyage in 1644. From then until 1647 it continued to perform escort and transport duties across the Atlantic, becoming in effect a substitute for the *armada de la guardia*, evidence that defence of the fleets was now being subsidised by the colonies themselves. Yet they were not even getting value for their money, for in 1648 the *Armada de Barlovento* was incorporated in the *Armada del Mar Océano*, and between then and 1667 there was no permanent defence squadron in the Caribbean. In 1665 the *Armada de Barlovento* was re-formed; it consisted of eight vessels, four of them specially built in Holland, and was immediately assigned to European duties. Two years later five of its units were dispatched to the Indies; two were quickly diverted to transatlantic duties, and the remainder were destroyed by Henry Morgan and his buccaneers at the entrance to Lake Maracaibo. In 1672 a revived *Armada de Barlovento* entered service; it consisted of five vessels with subsequent additions from Caribbean resources, and in more or less this form it survived for the rest of the century.

Meanwhile military fortifications had also received some attention. In the 1620's and 1640's defence installations in Cuba and other major bases were reconstructed and extended. The English capture of Jamaica in 1655 stimulated further defence programmes. 'By the last quarter of the seventeenth

[65] Veitia Linaje, *op. cit.*, pp. 540–56; Artiñano, *Historia del comercio con las Indias*, pp. 103–6; Haring, *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies*, pp. 252–57; Hussey, 'Spanish Reaction to Foreign Aggression in the Caribbean', *op. cit.*, pp. 296–301.

[66] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, v, 409–12.

century most harbors important for trade or military strategy possessed strong forts and fair garrisons'.[67]

This defence record was not unimpressive. No major possession was lost and no foreign colony was allowed to remain a danger. Had the metropolis properly used all the funds which the colonies appropriated to defence, instead of diverting them to Europe, even more could have been accomplished. As it was, resources were not sufficient to recover Jamaica and Curaçao, or to defend the most desirable islands in the Antilles against foreign occupation. From the mid-seventeenth century, with a growing sense of realism, Spain began to accept the inevitable. Foreigners, too, wanted peace in order to consolidate their possessions and extend their trade. There resulted a series of treaties recognising the existing situation in terms of effective occupation. In 1648 the Treaty of Munster gave the Dutch all the territory they actually occupied in America—this was not very much—in return for a promise not to trade with Spanish domains. In 1670 the Treaty of Madrid sanctioned Britain's retention of its existing possessions in the West Indies and America, against a promise to refrain from illegal trade. Meanwhile the hordes of independent pirates, the buccaneers, had also become an international nuisance, and by 1680 the English, French and Dutch, as well as the Spaniards, were taking action against them. Defence policy in the Caribbean therefore lost its urgency. And Spain could not reverse the economic trend which made contraband trade, in spite of treaty promises, an extensive and lucrative practice, widening the breach of the monopoly which had already been made at Cadiz.

5. Pacific Defence

The fleet system was designed to supply all the southern continent by way of the isthmus of Panama, thence down the Pacific to Peru and Chile, and inland to Upper Peru and the Río de la Plata. The Tierra Firme fleet transferred its cargo at Portobello; it was then transported in mule trains across the isthmus to Panama where the Pacific fleet, which had already brought up the silver consignments from Peru, was waiting to ship it to the southern markets.

To preserve this monopoly route and prevent the escape of Potosí silver the Spaniards closed the Río de la Plata to trade and shipping. For the same reason they also had to maintain Buenos Aires, fortified and populated, as a key defence point. But how could they attract settlers to this distant possession and at the same time enforce a closed-port policy which made it impossible for settlers to survive? To solve this dilemma Spain tried to do

[67] Hussey, 'Spanish Reaction to Foreign Aggression in the Caribbean', *op. cit.*, p. 295.

two things at once, to maintain her trade system and to relax it in the smallest possible degree in favour of Buenos Aires. A decree of 1618 re-defined the restrictions on the maritime trade of Buenos Aires; the port was allowed two licensed vessels a year to Seville and back, though the licences became ever more irregular and insufficient. And to seal off Buenos Aires from the silver province of Upper Peru an inland customs house was established in Córdoba, at the foot of the eastern cordillera; operating from about 1622, it charged 50 per cent. duties on goods moving inland.[68] This policy restricted the economic prospects of the Río de la Plata without greatly restricting contraband trade. Through the pampa route to Upper Peru the Portuguese directed a traffic which at its peak in 1600–20 may have taken returns amounting to 20 or even 25 per cent. of Potosí's silver production.[69] Spanish countermeasures reduced this traffic but did not eliminate it.

The Portuguese 'route to Potosí' was successful not because it was a superior route but because Potosí was an insatiable market. The Pacific provinces of the subcontinent were best supplied via Panama. This was the shortest route to the heart of Spanish South America, which, because of the location of silver deposits and labour supply, was nearer to the Pacific than the Atlantic. The transfer of merchandise at the isthmus was economically much less onerous than would have been the routing of trade across the vast and empty pampas of the Río de la Plata, devoid of inhabitants, water, and defences against marauding Indians. And navigation across the South Atlantic was extremely vulnerable to attack from Brazil, especially from the 1620's when the Dutch had a base there and from 1640 when the Portuguese were enemies of Spain. Pacific trading routes, on the other hand, had certain built-in advantages.

The principal trading route in the Spanish Pacific was that between Panama, Callao (the port of Lima) and Arica (the port of Potosí), which was simply an extension of the transatlantic route. There were also two secondary routes, Acapulco–Callao for trade between Mexico and Peru, and Acapulco–Manila for trans-Pacific trade. The targets most favoured by the enemies of Spain were the silver fleets from Arica to Panama and the Manila galleons. Yet the Pacific was effectively sealed to large-scale enemy penetration without too much effort by Spain. After the severe lessons taught by the English marauders in the late sixteenth century, the isthmus complex was now a focus

[68] Ricardo Levene, *Investigaciones acerca de la historia económica del virreinato del Plata* (1st ed., 1927–28, 2nd ed., 1952 reprinted by Academia Nacional de la Historia, *Obras de Ricardo Levene* 2, Buenos Aires, 1962), pp. 141–84; Mario Rodriguez, 'The Genesis of Economic Attitudes in the Río de la Plata', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, xxxvi (1956), 171–89; Raúl A. Molina, 'Una Historia Inédita de los primeros ochenta años de Buenos Aires. El "Defensorio" de D. Alonso de Solórzano y Velazco, Oidor de la Real Audiencia (1667)', *Revista de Historia de América*, no. 52 (1961), 429–97.

[69] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, p. 1182.

of defence which could not easily be breached. Access to the Pacific by sea round the Horn was limited by the navigational possibilities of the time. Spain never dominated the Straits of Magellan; shipping found it difficult to survive the unpredictable winds and the shallow waters of the narrowest straits, and the victims of shipwreck were likely to die of hunger and exposure in this cruel region. The same conditions prevented Spain's enemies from maintaining constant pressure via Cape Horn, and in the seventeenth century it remained an exceptional rather than a regular route.

In these circumstances the defence problem in the Pacific was not to stem a continuing wave of intruders but to have sufficient force to repulse rare attacks when they occurred. This did not require constant patrolling of the coast from Acapulco to the Straits. All that was needed was an efficient early-warning system and an *armada* based on Callao. The former was supplied by intelligence from Spain, which usually identified all hostile expeditions leaving Europe, and from warnings relayed up the Pacific coast once the enemy had navigated the Straits of Magellan. Naval power was provided by the *armada de la mar del Sur* operating out of Callao. From the late sixteenth century this consisted, when at full strength, of five galleons, built in the shipyards of Guayaquil from funds supplied by the *alcabala* revenue.[70] Its purpose was to transport silver, guard the silver route and escort merchant convoys between Arica, Callao and Panama. It was divided into two flotillas, each consisting of two galleons and a patache, one operating to the south, the other to the north, if necessary as far as Mexico, while the fifth galleon was held in reserve in Callao.[71]

For some years after the English intrusion in the sixteenth century the Spanish Pacific enjoyed a period of calm. This was disturbed by the coming of Dutch raiders, known to Spaniards as *Pechelingues*, a word corrupted from the name of the island port of Flushing. The first major expedition was dispatched by the Dutch East India Company in August 1614, during the period of truce with Spain. It consisted of four large and heavily armed warships and two smaller vessels, and it was commanded by Admiral Joris von Speilbergen, a German in the company's service. Its ultimate object was to trade and reinforce Dutch naval power in the Moluccas, but it was equally intended to attack the Spanish empire on the way.[72] The expedition entered

[70] Marie Helmer, 'Le Callao (1615–1618)', *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, ii (1965), 145–95; Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, p. 1107.

[71] The Peruvian convoy system was never as rigorous as the transatlantic one; merchants preferred to trade out of convoy, as the danger from pirates was intermittent and they wished to evade registration; see Helmer, 'Le Callao', *op. cit.*, pp. 174–76.

[72] See Peter Gerhard, *Pirates on the West Coast of New Spain* 1575–1742 (Glendale, 1960), pp. 108–21, a work which goes beyond its title and gives the most comprehensive and authoritative account of attack and defence in the Spanish Pacific.

the Pacific through the Straits of Magellan in May 1615 and as it moved up the coast warnings went ahead. Just south of Callao the way was barred by a Spanish squadron of eight ships (the southern flotilla reinforced by merchantmen) under Rodrigo de Mendoza; but in a sharp engagement on 17–18 July the Spaniards were soundly defeated, losing two warships and 450 men. With the whole west coast lying open, the Dutch ignored Callao, missed the northern *armada*, and sailed to Acapulco where they obtained provisioning facilities in exchange for return of Peruvian prisoners. In December they left Mexican waters to cross the Pacific and missed the Manila galleon.

After this uncomfortable experience the Spaniards began to look to their defences. The viceroy of New Spain began the construction of a fortress at Acapulco, and in Peru naval defences were improved. These were in the capable hands of viceroy the marquis of Esquilache, who brought the *armada* up to strength, increased its firepower and manpower, and formed militia units. But his programme was highly expensive and ate into imperial revenue, including the royal *quinto*; remittances to Spain were reduced, which was thought to be extremely inconvenient on the eve of the Thirty Years War, and so Esquilache was recalled. Colonial defence was sacrificed to policy in Europe.[73]

Yet Esquilache was right. In 1616 the Dutchman Jacob Le Maire discovered a new though hardly less dangerous or shorter passage into the Pacific south of Tierra del Fuego through the strait which still bears his name. This heralded a new series of raiders. In April 1623 the so-called Nassau fleet left Holland; consisting of 11 vessels, heavy armament, and 1,637 men under the command of Admiral Jacob L'Heremite, its object was not only to attack Spanish ports and shipping and impose contraband trade but also to challenge Spanish sovereignty in the Pacific by establishing a Dutch military and trading post in Peru or Chile in alliance with disaffected Indians.[74] The expedition entered the Pacific through the Le Maire Strait in February 1624 and arrived off Callao on 8 May, just five days after the viceroy, who had been forewarned, had dispatched to Panama the treasure fleet carrying two years' silver, some 9 million pesos.[75] At this point L'Heremite died and his successor, the young and inexperienced Hugo Schapenham, lost his chance through indecision. An ill-managed attack on Callao was repulsed, and the Dutch then spent over four months on the coast of Peru, accomplishing little apart from the destruction of Guayaquil and acquiring a bad reputation for killing prisoners. The expedition reached the coast of Mexico in October; but now Acapulco had its fortress and it refused provisions; at other points on the coast the Dutch

[73] Helmer, 'Le Callao', *op. cit.*, pp. 153–57.

[74] Gerhard, *op. cit.*, pp. 123–29; Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, v, 74–79.

[75] Fernández Duro, *op. cit.*, iv, 35–38.

were harried, and in November they abandoned their wait for the Manila galleon and left to cross the Pacific. This expedition was a failure, and the Spaniards had now evened the score.

Spanish defence forces now rested on their laurels. Viceroy Esquilache had tried to create a new and larger *armada de la mar del Sur* to patrol the coasts of Mexico, Central America, Peru and Chile. From 1624 to 1635 the idea was shuttled back and forth between Peru and Spain, based on a requirement of 10 galleons and 7,000 men at an estimated cost of 1 million pesos.[76] The idea was eventually abandoned, not because Peru lacked the money but because the crown wanted that money in Europe. Apart from some minor military and naval improvements, Spanish authorities continued to rely on the natural invulnerability of the Pacific. For the moment they were probably justified. After the fiasco of 1624 the Dutch confined their hostilities to the Atlantic side of America. Their last serious effort to penetrate the Spanish Pacific was the expedition of Hendrick Brouwer under the auspices of the Dutch West India Company. This was another attempt to establish a trading colony. The Dutch squadron arrived off the island of Chiloe in May 1643. Although Brouwer died a few months later, his men stayed on at Valdivia, built a fort, and attacked the Spaniards. But they found the land inhospitable and the Indians aloof; and they left in October 1643. So in the event the Dutch made little impact in the Spanish Pacific: the chief consequence of their activity was to raise the defence expenditure of the Lima treasury—200,000 pesos in 1624, 948,000 pesos in 1643.

In the second half of the seventeenth century, however, new enemies penetrated the Pacific, this time from the Caribbean. These were the buccaneers, the international gangsters of the Indies. From the 1640's to the 1670's, in alliance with the Indians of the Mosquito Shore, the buccaneers asserted control over the largely uncolonised east coast of Central America and made periodic raids inland. The San Juan River of Nicaragua offered access to the Pacific coast in spite of Spanish fortifications. In 1660 Henry Morgan led a raid on Costa Rica, though he was driven off. He returned to capture Portobello, which he held for a while in the summer of 1668. In January 1671 Morgan led an expedition across the isthmus of Panama, defeated a Spanish force 2,000 strong, held the city for a month, attacked other coastal settlements, and departed in March with substantial booty.[77] This was a pointer to his colleagues.

The isthmus of Panama was the vital link between the silver route from Peru and the transatlantic route from Spain. It had always been protected by distance. Now, after the English capture of Jamaica in 1655, its protection

[76] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, v, 75–79.
[77] Gerhard, *op. cit.*, pp. 139–41.

was removed. It needed military and naval security. After Morgan's raid Portobello and Panama were re-fortified, their garrisons were increased, and the silver route across the isthmus was strongly guarded. But a few miles east of Panama, in the province of Darien, swamp and jungle country, inhabited by Indians hostile to the Spaniards, offered another means of access to the Pacific. This jungle route became 'an inter-oceanic highway for the buccaneers'.[78]

In April 1680 English pirates launched a major invasion of the Pacific. First they took all the shipping in the Gulf of Panama. Then, after raiding, pillaging and capturing a silver transport in the vicinity, they sailed south along the Pacific coast under the command of Bartholomew Sharp; for over a year they raided the west coast of South America, including the silver port of Arica, and took two valuable prizes loaded with bullion. Eventually they left via Cape Horn and reached Barbados in February 1682. This was the most serious attack yet on the Spanish Pacific. The Spaniards estimated the damage to shipping and ports at over 4 million pesos; their merchant marine lost 25 ships; and they suffered more than 200 fatal casualties.[79] And there was more to come.

The largest buccaneer invasion of the Pacific began in March 1684 with the entry of three English ships, two through the Straits of Magellan, the third round Cape Horn.[80] They made their way to Central America where they were joined by other pirate gangs who had crossed the isthmus of Panama. In June 1685 in the Gulf of Panama they attacked a Spanish silver fleet from Callao; the Spaniards first landed their treasure and then beat off the pirates.[81] The invaders escaped to create immense havoc up and down the coast. They attacked coastal settlements in Nicaragua, careened in the Galápagos Islands, took a few prizes off Peru, raided Central America and Mexico, looted Guayaquil, but missed the Manila galleon; eventually the various groups left via Cape Horn or across Central America in the course of 1686–87. This was the last large-scale invasion of the Pacific. In May 1690 Captain John Strong entered through the Straits of Magellan on a contraband mission and disposed of most of his cargo in Peru; but this, like one or two other foreign incursions of the time, was a trading, not a piratical, expedition, and it heralded the French break-through into the Pacific in the early eighteenth century.

In the last decades of the seventeenth century Spanish defences were heavily handicapped by the inability of viceroys and merchants to agree on the division of responsibility and costs for defence against the buccaneer

[78] *Ibid.*, p. 146; see also G. Céspedes del Castillo, 'La defensa militar del istmo de Panamá a fines del siglo XVII y comienzos del XVIII', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, ix (1952), 235–75.
[79] Artiñano, *Historia del comercio con las Indias*, p. 225.
[80] Gerhard, *op. cit.*, pp. 154–94.
[81] Fernández Duro, *op. cit.*, v, 300–1.

incursions. As the Spaniards were reluctant or unable to meet the pirates at sea, in effect they had to fight land battles to defend their coastal possessions, as at Guayaquil in 1687 when a band of 300 buccaneers struck inland, terrorised the city, and escaped with their booty intact. In the same year, despairing of official action, a group of private merchants in Peru invested in a company of armed vessels to sweep the Pacific clear of pirates. The *armada de la mar del Sur* had been allowed to run down to two galleons and a patache. It was adequate for escorting silver fleets, as it showed in 1685, but for nothing more. From 1692 it acquired new vessels and was brought up to a strength of three galleons and two pataches, with 144 cannon and 1238 men[82]. But this was only possible because the *consulado* paid most of the bill.[83] Meanwhile the viceregal government refused to invest in defences at Guayaquil, though garrisons at Valdivia, Callao and Panama were strengthened.[84] The defence of the Pacific, therefore, was indebted to local resources and initiative, and if the viceroyalty had to provide men, materials and finances for its own protection, it was increasingly private enterprise rather than the state which provided them, further evidence of the growth of local economic resources and their deployment in America.

6. The Collapse of American Trade

In the sixteenth century the Indies trade underwent two long phases of expansion, from 1504 to 1550 and from 1562 to 1592, separated by a mid-century recession of twelve years. This was followed by a reversal of the major trend between 1593 and 1622, and the great depression from 1623 to 1650.[85] The movement of vessels between Spain and America quadrupled

[82] Céspedes, 'La defensa militar del istmo de Panamá', *op. cit.*, pp. 250–51.

[83] Lawrence A. Clayton, 'Local Initiative and Finance in Defence of the Viceroyalty of Peru: the Development of Self-Reliance', *HAHR*, 54, 2 (1974), 284–304.

[84] See below, p. 244.

[85] The trends have been identified and the estimates computed by Chaunu. Valuable reviews of this great work are provided by H. G. Koenigsberger, *English Historical Review* (1961), 675–81; C. H. Haring, 'Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies: a Re-view—1918–1958', *H.A.H.R.*, xl (1960), 53–62; Robert S. Smith, 'Seville and the Atlantic; Cycles in Spanish Colonial Trade', *Journal of Economic History*, xxii (1962), 253–59. It has received a more critical reception from W. Brulez, 'Séville et l'Atlantique: quelques réflexions critiques', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*, xlii (1964), 568–92. Lacking production statistics, Chaunu assumes that tonnage statistics—the carrying capacity of vessels leaving and returning to Seville—measure general economic activity. Doubtless there are margins of error caused by fraud, arrivals and departures at other ports than Seville–Cadiz, the failure of some vessels to fill their cargo capacity and the tendency of others to overfill, and the loss of vessels on voyage. But Chaunu is aware of almost every possible contingency, and in particular he has anticipated criticisms concerning the relation between tonnage and the volume of merchandise carried, by showing that shippers bought or chartered vessels of a particular tonnage according to the state of the trade; Spanish shippers were not so devoid of economic instincts as to underutilise their vessels over a long period. Finally, Chaunu does more than measure an exclusively Spanish commercial activity; his Atlantic is the European Atlantic, for it is incontrovertible that most European merchants preferred to trade via Seville rather than in the Indies themselves.

between 1506 and 1620, from 226 sailings (outbound and inbound) in 1506–10 to 867 in 1616–20. The number of sailings reached three quinquennial peaks, 874 in 1546–50, 886 in 1586–90, and 965 in 1606–10; but they dropped to 366 in 1646–50, and the average in 1641–50 was practically the same as in 1521–25. Gross tonnage (outbound and inbound) increased from 15,680 tons in 1511–15, to 273,560 in 1606–10; between then and 1646–50 it suffered a 60 per cent. drop, to 121,308 tons. The whole period may be divided into (a) a long wave of expansion, culminating in 1608, and (b) a prolonged period of contraction, interrupted by short upturns.

Until the seventeenth century the trade of Tierra Firme (mainly Peru) and New Spain was more or less balanced, rather more than 40 per cent. of the trade going to Tierra Firme, rather less than 40 per cent. to New Spain, the remainder to the Caribbean islands. Until about 1570–80 exports to America were dominated by grain, oil and wine. But from then, when the colonists had settled for home-produced meat, wheat and maize, and their own wine production had increased, foodstuffs gave way to textiles and hardware. To about 1580–90 Spanish products dominated the trade; subsequently the products of northern Europe and France eroded the Spanish monopoly. Imports from America were dominated by precious metals; in value they constituted more than 90 per cent. of returns.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century the outbound fleets carried wine, oil, mercury, iron and hardware, textiles, books and paper. But the export pattern of the colonies was changing, evidence of a shift in the American economies. In 1594 precious metals formed 95·62 per cent. of total imports from America.[86] In 1609 they were down to 84 per cent., the remainder being agricultural and colonial products, mostly Mexican. In this period Mexico sent back silver, cochineal, hides, indigo, wool, dyes, dyewoods, medicinal plants and, especially in the years 1600–20, Chinese silks, re-exports from Manila.[87] In 1609 Mexico exported to Spain 3·3 million pesos of precious metals (public and private); non-treasure exports totalled 1·8 million pesos, or about 35 per cent. of the value of cargo.[88] Mexico's non-treasure exports became progressively more important as the colony diversified its economy. The Peruvian economy on the other hand, more 'colonial' in its structure, was more closely tied to mining, and Peru exported little but silver to Spain.

The years 1592–1622 form a plateau between expansion and contraction, a high plateau to be sure, with continuing signs of prosperity but equally distinct signs of hesitation which indicate a reversal of the previous trend.[89] At

[86] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 33–34.

[87] François Chevalier, 'Les cargaisons des flottes de Nouvelle Espagne vers 1600', *Revista de Indias*, iv (1943), 323–30.

[88] *Ibid.*, p. 329.

[89] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 852–1525.

the end of this period sailings (outbound and inbound) dropped by 10 per cent., from 867 in 1616–20 to 775 in 1621–25. The relative roles of Tierra Firme and New Spain also began to fluctuate. Between 1581 and 1590 Tierra Firme had contributed the major part in trade and in silver to the great expansion of those years. But between 1596 and 1620 the high plateau was sustained by increasing contributions of trade from New Spain. After 1620 New Spain flagged again, leaving Tierra Firme to sustain the plateau. Prices and the Indies trade fluctuated in more or less regular periods, and did so in statistical correlation. The end of expansion corresponded to the reversal of the major trend of prices about 1605, followed by the depression of real prices in 1609–12. Subsequent inflation was artificially induced by monetary debasement, especially from the 1620's, which was not healthy for the Indies trade or for any trade.

The great inflation of the sixteenth century had been engendered in large part by treasure imports. These now began to drop, from 35·1 million pesos in 1591–95, to 24·4 million in 1601–5, to 17·1 million in 1631–35. Crown receipts dropped almost 40 per cent. from 10·9 million pesos in 1596–1600 to 6·5 million in 1601–5; there was a long plateau from 1616 to 1645 when they scarcely rose above 4 million in any quinquennium, followed by a further drop to 1·6 million in 1646–50, to 606,524 in 1656–60.[90] The depression of public treasure receipts was a further sign of a changing empire, for it represented to some degree an increase in the cost of colonial administration and defence, a kind of state investment in the Indies. The reversal of the major trend of private treasure receipts occurred rather later than that of public receipts. Although they fell from 25·1 million pesos in 1591–95 to 17·8 million in 1601–5, they rose again to 25·7 million in 1616–20; they then dropped to 20·3 million in 1626–30, to 12·3 million in 1631–35; after this the fall was irretrievable, to 10·1 million in 1646–50, 5 million in 1651–55, and 2·7 million in 1656–60.

What was the relation of treasure, prices, and trade? What was the effect of the 16,887 tons of silver and 1,813 tons of gold—or perhaps double this amount if allowance is made for contraband—delivered from America to Spain between 1501 and 1650? This massive importation of treasure directly affected prices, which in turn stimulated trade, or, when imports levelled off

[90] Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain*, pp. 34–38. It is difficult to correlate treasure receipts and trade performance, for treasure was the commodity most susceptible to fraud. Hamilton suggests a 10 per cent. margin of error through contraband, but this is too low; from about 1630 the amount of treasure escaping control of the *Casa de Contratacion* may have exceeded the amount registered. Unregistered bullion was most likely to go abroad as immediate returns to foreigners, while most of the registered bullion remained in Spain and was re-invested in the Indies trade. The statistics therefore have some value; see Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, p. 902.

and fell, depressed it. Treasure returns gave merchants the capital for further investment; when treasure diminished, trade was starved of finance. But the more the American trade expanded in the second half of the sixteenth century, the greater the amount of treasure it needed to keep it going. For treasure induced inflation, which meant that the yield of mining in effect progressively diminished: the very success of American mining caused the value of its yield to decrease.[91] In the course of the sixteenth century prices in Spain quadrupled; in the same period the value of gold and silver, as merchandise, decreased by about three-quarters. To prolong the expansion, to sustain the purchasing power of gold and silver, mining production had to grow faster than prices and trade. This could only be done by constant extension of the mining area or great improvement of technology. By about 1590, however, the Spaniards had exhausted the immediately available mineral wealth of America without renewing their methods. With the primitive production techniques of the colonists, the Spanish American economy had reached the limits of its expansion; it was also seriously affected by labour shortage caused by the depopulation of the Indian sector. Simultaneously the colonists were beginning to supply their own needs and becoming less dependent on European imports; the growing self-sufficiency of the empire was a basic factor in the crisis of the Indies trade. Up to 1622 the curve of prices and trade remained roughly level. But in the meantime Spain's own economy had been seriously weakened by an extraordinary rise in wages caused by acute labour shortage after the plague of 1599–1600 and the expulsion of the moriscos in 1609.

Even in this period, however, the Indies trade was still capable of striking performance. The year 1608 was the 'year of all the records'.[92] The previous year had seen the worst recession yet; outward sailings dropped from 98 in 1606 to 37 in 1607 (62 per cent.), and tonnage from 23,286 tons to 9,783 (57 per cent.).[93] In 1608 massive convoys totalling 202 ships and 54,093 tons were dispatched to America, an increase of 445·9 per cent. in vessels and 452·9 per cent. in tonnage. This was 50 per cent. better than the previous peak in 1596, and it was never equalled again. Indeed 1608 was a flash of lightning out of surrounding gloom, a year of fragile prosperity made at the expense of subsequent years. In 1609 the trade returned to the secular norm—138 ships and 32,536 tons outwards.[94] There were serious fears in Seville that the Mexican market had reached saturation point. And there were other signs of trouble. The Tierra Firme fleet of this year brought to Seville a horde of *Peruleros*. These, as their name implies, were factors of creole business houses in Peru.

[91] See the acute analysis by Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, p. 917.
[92] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, p. 1276.
[93] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, p. 1236.
[94] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, p. 1299.

They were not to tied to monopolistic trading practices as were the merchants of Seville; they brought with them large supplies of capital for use in Europe; and they were, if anything, even more serious competitors than the foreigners.[95] The presence of the *Peruleros* in Seville, their employment of American capital in a trade which was theoretically the monopoly of Spain, was a further sign of the re-orientation of the empire and of its growing economic independence. The normal reaction of the monopolists to crisis was to restrict trade, induce shortage and raise prices. The *Peruleros* resisted this practice. In 1610, in opposition to the *consulado* of Seville, they insisted on dispatching a fleet. Peru itself was advancing and demanding more trade, including naval stores for its shipyards; the growth of American shipping and its competition with Spanish trade and navigation were yet further signs of the shift of power from Andalucía.

In 1611 recession was manifest. Traffic (outbound and inbound) fell from 201 to 159 sailings (21 per cent.), tonnage from 65,713 to 41,684 tons (36·6 per cent.). The volume of traffic to New Spain in 1611 was almost 50 per cent. less than in 1609, and by 1620 outbound traffic was down to 47 vessels; the colony's withdrawal into itself was now irreversible.[96] Many of the vessels in the transatlantic fleets were no longer Spanish. From 1614 Biscayan predominance in Indies shipping became a thing of the past. Instead of replacing stock by new orders from Basque shipyards, Spanish shippers relied more and more on foreign, Portuguese, and American vessels.[97] Difficulties were aggravated by the shortage of seamen and the high level of wages. Seville's response to recession was to reduce tonnage and ship only the most expensive and lucrative goods; these were necessarily foreign manufactures, a development which favoured the drift of trade from Seville to Cadiz, the port preferred by foreigners. The crisis of 1619–23 was all the more ominous as it was not a war-induced crisis of a type familiar to Spanish trade—the years 1609–21 were ones of exceptional peace—but a crisis caused by structural failings within the Indies trade.

From 1623 the trend was sharply and irretrievably downwards, both in prices and in the volume and value of trade. The great depression had begun, and it continued until, by 1650, the American trade in its classical form and dimensions was almost totally destroyed. In traffic and tonnage the depression was in the order of at least 50 per cent.: sailings (outbound and inbound) dropped from 965 in 1606–10 to 366 in 1646–50; gross tonnage dropped from 273,560 tons in 1606–10 to 121,308 in 1646–50.[98] The depression gathered momentum between 1621–25 and 1626–30, total sailings dropping

[95] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1330–32; see below, pp. 214–15.
[96] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1336–45, 1499.
[97] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1415–17.
[98] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1541–43.

from 775 to 588 (about 24 per cent.). The trend was most evident in the outward traffic to New Spain; its portion of total trade moved from 43·19 per cent. in 1621–25, to 28·58 per cent. in 1626–30, to 29·82 per cent. in 1631–35, while Tierra Firme climbed up to 51·23 per cent.[99] Peru was now the most important sector of the transatlantic economy and it attracted relatively more trade. The balance in favour of Peru can also be seen in the origin of treasure imports.[100] Between 1586 and 1625 Mexico supplied 36 per cent. of total treasure imports, Peru 64 per cent., evidence not only of major depression of Mexican mining but also of the fact that Mexico was diversifying its economy more rapidly than Peru. Mexican consignments decreased to 21 per cent. of total treasure receipts in 1626–30, while those from Peru rose to 79 per cent. And while the actual amount from Mexico fell from 10·8 million pesos in 1621–25 to 5 million in 1626–30, Peru's contribution rose from 16·2 million pesos in 1621–25 to 19·5 million in 1626–30. There was therefore some correlation between the recession in trade and treasure. It was evidently in the 1620's that the collapse of New Spain's first economy became most pronounced. This was the major factor behind the crisis in the American trade.

New Spain was the sick man of the transatlantic economy from the 1620's to the 1650's. Depopulation of the Indians deprived the colony of a sufficient labour force to keep its economy at its former level, and it was not until the second half of the seventeenth century that there were signs of demographic recovery. In the absence of significant technological change or the discovery of new mineral resources, there was no possibility of Mexico's renewing its contribution to transatlantic trade before the eighteenth century.[101] Basic change in the Mexican economy, therefore, disrupted the Atlantic trade and the Pacific trade between Acapulco and Manila, which also suffered recession in the 1620's.[102] But the crisis was aggravated by other factors. The correlation between treasure, prices, and trade was again significant. The precipitous drop in royal treasure returns was one of the reasons why the crown had recourse to monetary inflation by debasement, which was highly damaging to commercial transactions, especially from the 1620's. The slump in Spanish shipping was another factor. In the course of the depression of 1623–50 Biscayan shipping dropped to less than one-third of the vessels employed on the transatlantic run. More than one-third were now foreign vessels, principally English and Dutch; while American vessels, the products of Havana

[99] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1534–35.
[100] Again these are the official figures of registered treasure, but assuming that contraband was roughly the same for both sectors they give the relative position.
[101] For a more detailed discussion of Mexico's crisis see below, pp. 219–31.
[102] Pierre Chaunu, *Les Philippines et le Pacifique des Ibériques* (Paris, 1960), pp. 96–97, 100–1, 102–3, 222–23.

shipyards, contributed the remaining third.[103] In terms of shipping, therefore, Spain was losing control of her imperial communications. Here the state also played a part, for it preferred large galleons for war-time *armadas* and convoys. This again favoured Cadiz against Seville, and had further repercussions on the other side of the Atlantic. It meant that many of the island and coastal settlements of the Caribbean, where navigation was difficult for heavy galleons, were virtually abandoned; this neglect of the poor relations of the empire precipitated their economic independence and widened the breach for foreign interlopers; these increased their pressure from 1620, still further from 1630.[104] Finally, the Indies trade, stripped of its resources, was all the more sensitive to renewed warfare; the enemy was now a constant menace, especially the Dutch who from the 1620's obtained a foothold in Brazil. In 1628, at the hands of the Dutch, the *carrera* suffered a crushing defeat at Matanzas, its first real defeat. Apart from the loss of vessels and the grievous loss of seamen, the trade was deprived of almost a year's returns from New Spain, estimated at 36–40 per cent. of its working capital.[105] Matanzas was also a profound psychological shock which heightened the nervous tension within the *carrera* and hastened its breakdown.

The American trade paid for Matanzas in the period immediately following. The years 1629–31 were catastrophic.[106] The presence of the Dutch in Brazil undermined the confidence of investors. It also forced the *carrera* to increase its defences, a burden which the enfeebled trade could not bear. The *avería* was no longer sufficient to finance even minimum defence requirements, and could only cover 50 per cent. of the cost of the *armada de la guardia*. The ever growing shortage of seamen, and their cost, reached a point where the navy was reduced to augmenting crews with slaves. Traffic (outbound and inbound) fell from 143 sailings in 1630 to 79 in 1631 (44 per cent.), gross tonnage from 59,025 tons to 22,367 (60 per cent.).[107] In 1635 the war with France caused the government to divert some of the transatlantic galleons to the home fleet; their places were taken by more foreign vessels, together with their crews and masters.[108] In the years 1637–38 Spanish vessels almost disappeared from the Indies trade and those that remained were old and unseaworthy. Altogether this was a depressing decade for Seville and Cadiz.

The catastrophe of 1629–31 was repeated in 1639–41.[109] In the period

[103] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, p. 1563.
[104] *Ibid.*, viii, 1, pp. 224–28.
[105] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, p. 1645.
[106] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1653–84.
[107] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, p. 1677.
[108] Chaunu refers to 'l'importation massive de navires anglais et hanseates' in 1635–38, *ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1757, 1796.
[109] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1793–1851.

1632–41 the annual average of sailings (outbound and inbound) was 94; in 1639–41 it dropped to 69. The trade was starved of capital: private receipts of American silver, which had totalled 25·7 million pesos in 1616–20, fell to 12·3 million in 1631–35, and to 11·6 million in 1636–40. In 1639 the fleet to New Spain was cancelled in order to concentrate available resources on that to Tierra Firme. From now the cost of the *armadas* fell more and more on the royal treasury, for the *consulado* of Seville, which in 1640 undertook a three-year *avería* contract, was forced to declare itself bankrupt. The weakened fabric of trade was further torn by the political crisis of 1640. True, the revolt of Catalonia had no direct repercussions in Seville, nor did it visibly affect the Indies trade.[110] But the revolt of Portugal was a different matter. Portugal was an important sector of the Spanish Atlantic; its alienation from Spain was a consequence of economic depression and of the attendant restraint on Portuguese in the Spanish empire; and its revolt heightened the sense of uncertainty in Seville and directly affected investment.[111] Military conflict in the peninsula, moreover, forced up the government's defence budget and launched the wildest vellon inflation to date, a severe handicap for any trade to bear. On top of everything came a major calamity at sea in 1641 which revealed in microcosm the whole Atlantic crisis. The returning New Spain convoy was shattered by hurricane in the Bahama channel and lost ten vessels totalling 5,000 tons.[112] This was not a random disaster. The ships themselves were in a pitiable state to start with; they had been further impaired when the sluggishness of the market caused them to be immobilised at Vera Cruz for more than a year, exposed in the warm seas of the tropics to the *broma*, that deterioration of hulls and cordage dreaded by seamen; and the fleet did not command the financial resources to refit. It then left Havana over three weeks after the last date (20 August) set by meteorological observation as the margin of safety before the hurricane season. To ignore the experience of a century and a half of Atlantic navigation was inviting disaster, for the sake moreover of a cargo which was at best mediocre. The whole episode was a sign of the times.

The depression continued unabated for the rest of the decade. In 1650 traffic (outbound and inbound) totalled only 51 sailings, gross tonnage 14,022 tons.[113] The convoys were sailing without their full complement of escorts, as European defence needs diverted warships to other duties. American vessels now outnumbered those built in Spain, a further stage in demonopolisation and a further shift towards American control of the trade,

[110] *Ibid.*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1831–32.
[111] On the reaction against the Portuguese in the Spanish empire see above, pp. 121–2.
[112] See above, pp. 190–91.
[113] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1867–68, 1876, 1952.

first heralded by the appearance of the *Peruleros*. The Mexican sector continued to contract; its contribution to total colonial exports fell from 40 per cent. in 1636–40 to 22 per cent. in 1646–50, while that of Tierra Firme rose from 60 to 78 per cent. Silver returns from Peru thus maintained themselves, while those of New Spain collapsed.

After 1650 the Atlantic trade decayed even further. The golden days of Seville were now over and Cadiz took the remnants of former prosperity. English naval operations in 1656–57 brought a new period of insecurity, accounting for a substantial part of the Tierra Firme fleet at Cadiz in 1656 and the New Spain fleet in the Canaries in the following year.[114] In 1659 the Tierra Firme fleet carried cópious remittances, the accumulation of three years. It was diverted to Santander to avoid a repetition of 1656, but Santander lacked even the modest machinery of control possessed by Seville and Cadiz, and the opportunities for fraud were unlimited. The New Spain fleet of 1661 was diverted to La Coruña, with similar results. A *consulta* of the *junta de guerra* testified to the Spaniards' helplessness.[115] It reported that numerous foreign vessels lay in wait at Cadiz to syphon off the silver from the returning fleets. In 1659 and 1661 they simply transferred to Santander and La Coruña in the company of the fleets and there continued operations. It was thought too dangerous to take rigorous counter-measures, for fear of provoking armed attack which Spain did not have the means to repulse. The report even justified the situation by arguing that foreigners had legitimate rights to bullion in return for their considerable exports to America.

The fleets continued to sail for the rest of the century, and after the collapse of 1650–60 there were signs, if only spasmodic, of a revival of trade and treasure returns. Sailings were less frequent: between 1650 and 1699 there were only 25 *flotas* and 16 *galeones*, an average of one convoy to New Spain every two years, and one to Tierra Firme every three years. But in these fleets considerable exports were concentrated, and the accumulated returns were the more abundant. Merchants continued to employ Spanish ships and Spanish shipyards to build them. In the period 1650–99 national vessels in the *carrera* numbered 289, or 31 per cent. of the whole; Spain's American shipyards supplied a further 211 vessels (22·6 per cent.); 275 (29·5 per cent.) were foreign-built, and 155 of unknown origin. The use of Spanish vessels rose especially in the 1670's and 1680's, coinciding with a period of improved export performance. Does this mean that the depression was halted, perhaps reversed?

The records show that the Indies trade dropped from 6573 vessels in

[114] See above, pp. 132, 190.

[115] Sept.–Oct., 1661, cited by Domínguez Ortiz, 'Los caudales de Indias y la política exterior de Felipe IV', *op. cit.*, p. 376.

1600–50 to 1835 in 1650–99, leaving the last fifty years with only 22 per cent. of the century's traffic.[116] No doubt the downward process slowed from the 1650's, but by now the depression was so deep that the upward spasms of the 1660's and 1670's were of little significance. Numbers of vessels and tonnage values from 1650 demonstrate that the downward trend which had begun in 1620 continued and even worsened up to 1715. The moving average of ships and tonnage descends inexorably in these years. In terms of gross tonnage of outbound trade, the negative trend can be seen in the ten-year averages: 1641–50, 7345 tons; 1651–60, 4559 tons; 1661–70, 4511 tons; 1671–80, 4797 tons; 1681–90, 3898 tons; 1691–1700, 3481 tons; 1701–10, 1729 tons. This points to a 76·5 per cent. loss of traffic between 1641–50 and 1701–10. There was, in short, sustained crisis in the Indies trade after 1650, reaching a low point in 1685–1700, with worse to come in 1700–15. The signs of recovery in 1660, 1662, 1675, 1678 and 1695, were no more than isolated fluctuations, flickers in a gloom of depression.

While the American trade diminished, so did Spain's share of it. The proportion accruing to foreigners cannot be measured precisely, but observers had no doubt that it was large.[117] According to an estimate of 1687, an average of 20 million pesos was brought in each fleet from New Spain, of which 15 million were destined for foreigners. As the profits of American trade slipped away, Spain's share was reduced to some 20 or 30 per cent. of legal trade, not counting contraband.

The American trade, therefore, suffered depression but not complete collapse, and imports from the Indies by no means came to an end. On the evidence of consular reports, contemporary newspapers and other narrative sources, silver remittances were still copious. At Cartagena and Portobello the galleons normally transacted business to the value of 22–25 million pesos each visit. The Mexican fleets totalled between 10 and 30 million pesos each in the years 1685–97. Towards the end of the century there were some record returns, 40 million pesos in the *galeones* of 1691, 30 million in the *flota* of 1697, brilliant results by any standards. While the evidence is incomplete, unofficial estimates indicate that the quinquennial totals of the American trade in 1671–1700 varied between 40 and 67·5 million pesos.[118] Precious metals formed some 85–90 per cent. of these returns.

[116] Lutgardo García Fuentes, *El comercio español con América*, 1650–1700 (Seville, 1980), pp. 164, 203–7, 230–31, 232–6; Antonio García-Baquero González, *Cádiz y el Atlántico* (1717–1778) (2 vols., Seville, 1976), i. 150, ii, graphs 3, 4, 6, 7, 13.

[117] Girard, *op. cit.*, pp. 323, 414, 445–55.

[118] Michel Morineau, 'D'Amsterdam à Séville: De quelle réalité l'histoire des prix est'elle le miroir?', *Annales*, 23, 1 (1968), 178–205, and the same author's 'Gazettes hollandaises et trèsors americaines', *Anuario de Historia Económica y Social*, 2 (1969), 289–361, 3 (1970), 139–209; John Everaert, 'Le commerce colonial de la "Nation Flamande" à Cadix sous Charles II (Ca. 1670–1700)', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, 28 (1971), 139–51.

American Treasure Returns to Spain and Europe 1651–1700 in Million Pesos

Quinquennia	*Unofficial Estimates*	*Official Figures*
1651–55		11·8
1656–60		5·5
1661–65	28·8	6·9
1666–70	32·4	4·3
1671–75	42	4·2
1676–80	40	3·9
1681–85	22·2	1·9
1686–90	39·3	2·2
1691–95	34·2	0·1
1696–1700	46·2	1·9

Source: Morineau, 'D'Amsterdam à Séville', pp. 178–205; García Fuentes, *El comercio español a América*, pp. 388–9.

Spanish official sources tell a different story.[119] Declared returns for the entire period 1650–1700 amounted to only 11,875 million maravedis (43·6 million pesos), of which 45 per cent. came in the New Spain fleets, 54 per cent. in those of Tierra Firme; 49 per cent. went to the royal account, 51 per cent. to the private sector. Compared to 99,618 million maravedis declared in the first half of the century, this was a decrease of 88 per cent. No doubt lower levels of the legal returns can be explained by their omission of unregistered and exempted bullion; to this extent they are less realistic than the unofficial estimates. But it is fair to assume that the latter too are well below their equivalents in the first half of the century, and that bullion returns, like the outbound traffic, were in a state of prolonged depression.

The survival of American trade brought little relief to Spain. Her own trading difficulties could be seen in the collapse of the defence tax, the *avería*.

From 1641 the *consulado* of Seville, which had gone bankrupt on its contract of 1640, refused to handle the tax, and the state had to resume its administration. As the amount of registered trade diminished through fraud, so did the yield of the *avería*. The parlous condition of the Spanish marine and the rising costs of ship-building drove the state to desperate expedients in fulfilment of its defence obligations. Tne government had no credit abroad; to procure warships for the convoys from foreign sources it had to make expensive contracts each year with private merchants whose credit was better than its own. When it tried to recoup its losses by raising the *avería* it simply encountered more fraud. The point was eventually

[119] García Fuentes, *El comerico español con América*, pp. 381, 388–9.

reached when the government preferred to demand from merchants a fixed contribution and to abandon the system of taxation. By decree of 11 March 1660 it was declared that private treasure and merchandise shipped from the Indies would no longer be subject to the formalities of registration nor the payment of *ad valorem* taxes of *avería*, *almojarifazgo* or any other import duty. Instead a fixed quota was imposed on the fleets, to be paid by the merchants of Andalucía and the Indies, for the expenses of convoys and *armadas*. The new system was designed to raise 790,000 ducats, distributed as follows: Peru 350,000 ducats; New Spain 200,000; New Granada 50,000; Cartagena 40,000; the royal treasury 150,000.[120] The total sum was supposed to correspond to the costs of an *armada de la guardia* for the Tierra Firme fleet and two armed escorts for the New Spain fleet. This arrangement, too, underwent vicissitudes in the course of the century, but it was better than an unrealistic *avería*. Although Andalucía was not apparently assessed, in fact it paid the New Spain quota. The *consulado* of Seville therefore suggested a reassessment which was accepted in 1667: royal treasury 150,000 ducats; Peru 350,000; Andalucía 170,000; New Spain, 90,000; Cartagena and New Granada 30,000; total 790,000.

It is tempting to attribute the mid-century crisis of the American trade and the subsequent decrease of Spanish returns to the collapse of the colonial economies. But these economies did not collapse: consumer imports were maintained and so was mining production. If the evidence proves anything it is that depression was the fate of Spain rather than America. Although the mines of Mexico and Peru could not sustain their great peak of the 1620's, they continued to produce silver in abundance for the rest of the seventeenth century. A small portion of this went to Spain. Some went to the Far East through the trade with Manila. A much larger percentage went to Europe. And an unknown but sizeable amount stayed in America. There the historical process was one of change rather than collapse. If the colonies no longer fed the trade as of old, it was largely because they were employing their capital at home, in public and private investment. More than this, they even absorbed Spanish and European capital. By the 1640's more and more merchants were leaving their bullion returns in America, especially in Peru, either as loans or investments, thus avoiding the risk of sequestration in Spain. Even if this was only a temporary expedient, it suggests that there was a profitable use for capital in America and is evidence of economic vigour and autonomy. The crisis in the *carrera de Indias* occurred not because the American economies were collapsing but because they were developing and disengaging themselves from their primitive dependence on the mother country. This was the first emancipation of Spanish America.

[120] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, v, 415–16; Céspedes, *La averia en el comercio de Indias*, pp. 89–96.

CHAPTER VIII

SPANISH AMERICA: A CHANGING EMPIRE

1. The Hispanic World: A New Balance of Power

In the prime of empire Spain held her colonies in leading strings.[1] Spanish bureaucrats supplied their government, Spanish merchants their material needs. Manufactures, equipment, even foodstuffs were so apportioned from Spain as to yield the maximum return for the minimum outlay. Payment was demanded in precious metals, virtually the only commodity of interest to the metropolis. The foci of empire were therefore the silver colonies of Mexico and Peru, whose societies and economies were orientated around mining production. Other settlements were assigned inferior status and given the minimum support compatible with imperial defence. The system was paternal, benevolent, but essentially exploitative. And the balance of power was firmly weighted towards the metropolis.

This primitive imperialism could not endure. Mineral wealth was a wasting asset, and invariably engendered other activities. American societies gradually acquired an identity and a life of their own, developing further sources of wealth, reinvesting in production, improving their subsistence economies in foodstuffs, wine, oil, and cloth. As the first mining cycle came to an end in Mexico, the colony rebuilt its economy around agriculture and livestock and began to supply some of its own needs in manufactured goods. Peru still had considerable mining capacity and remained less 'developed' than Mexico; but Peru, too, diversified its economy, exploited its natural resources, and absorbed its own wealth. As the inequity, shortages and high prices of the Spanish monopoly system became more flagrant, the colonies extended economic relations between themselves, and inter-colonial trade developed a buoyancy of its own, independent of the transatlantic network. Economic growth was accompanied by social change, by the formation of a creole elite of landowners and merchants whose interests did not always coincide with those of the metropolis, least of all in their pressing claims to property

[1] On the Spanish empire in America there are two fine works, C. H. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America* (New York, 1952), and Bailey W. Diffie, *Latin American Civilization: Colonial Period* (Harrisburg, 1945); and two distinguished recent accounts, J. H. Parry, *The Spanish Seaborne Empire* (London, 1966), and Charles Gibson, *Spain in America* (New York, 1966).

and labour. While the colonial aristocracy never acquired formal political power, it was a force which bureaucrats could not ignore, and Spanish colonial government became in effect a compromise between imperial sovereignty and settler interests.

The new balance of power was reflected in the diminution of treasure returns to Spain.[2] This was a consequence not merely of recession in the mining industry but also of redistribution of wealth within the Hispanic world. It meant that the colonies now appropriated more of their own production, and employed their capital in their own administration, defence, and investment. Living more for itself, America gave less to Spain and shared less in Spain's European commitments. Spain's recession was America's growth.

Shift of power from the peninsula was also noticeable outside the mining colonies. This was not a universal trend, for there is no doubt that some parts of America suffered real recession or worse. Central America experienced absolute depression in virtually every sector of its economy in the seventeenth century, when the area became 'rural, self-contained, and isolated', though not necessarily less dependent on outside economies.[3] Elsewhere it was different. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, particularly towards 1620, new plantation economies appeared, self-sufficient in their development, outside the *carrera de Indias*, and beyond the control of Spain. Unlike the mines, the plantations did not work for Spain; they sold their products directly to foreigners or to other colonies; and they employed a type of shipping which the monopoly trade no longer possessed —small, mobile vessels, plying singly or in flotillas, with a rapid turn-round. Tobacco plantations brought modest prosperity to the forgotten coasts of eastern Tierra Firme and its adjacent islands, to Trinidad, Cumaná, Caracas, Río de la Hacha, Maracaibo, and Margarita.[4] By 1621 Trinidad was producing 6,000 arrobas of tobacco a year, Cumaná 12,000. An active contraband trade developed; the Portuguese, English and Dutch were soon involved; and slave ships were found to serve a double purpose, taking labour in and products out. Many of these slave cargoes, licensed by the Spanish crown for Peru and Mexico, were in fact diverted from their official markets by growing demand in the new plantations, ready to expand their investment and compete for labour with the older colonies. By the early 1620's the Portuguese virtually monopolised the tobacco trade, shipping the commodity direct to Europe. When, in 1621, the Spanish

[2] See above, pp. 182, 202, 206–7.

[3] Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America. A Socioeconomic History, 1520–1720* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1973), pp. 341, 388–9.

[4] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, pp. 602–12.

government was alerted and tried to impose a state monopoly in tobacco, it was too late; producers preferred the more regular traffic and the better prices of the contrabandists. The tobacco cycle was succeeded by cacao. Plantations of cacao were developed in the central valleys of Venezuela towards the end of the sixteenth century, and by 1630 there were half a million trees in the various centres of production. Cacao gave rise to a creole aristocracy of plantation owners, the *grandes cacaos*, who invested in Negro slaves, extended their holdings, and grew rich from a lucrative export trade. Cacao was exported not to Spain but to Mexico, earning for Venezuela a growing share of Mexico's silver.

The expansion of economic activity in the colonies denoted an investment pattern—American capital in the American economy—which though modest in its proportions was outside the transatlantic sector. There was also a certain flow of capital into America from outside; Spanish merchants and royal bankers often preferred to have their loans to the government repaid on the American treasuries and to employ their capital in America, removed from sequestration and from the heavier taxes of the peninsula. Finally, Americans began to export their capital and to employ it in Europe. This was the significance of the *Peruleros*, who made their presence felt in Seville from the early seventeenth century.[5] The *Peruleros* brought silver from Peru to employ it directly in Spain, either on their own account or more often as factors of Peruvian capitalists. They disrupted the commercial practices of the *carrera de Indias*, for they were not content to buy at the American end of the trade but preferred to do their business in Europe, competing with the Spanish monopolists. The latters' resentment bore more than a trace of anti-Americanism. The *contador*, Antonio de Rojas, reported on the intruders to Olivares in 1623:

> There ought to be a law against the so-called *Peruleros* who come from Tierra Firme to do business in Spain and cause notorious damage to our own trade. . . . They are the drones in the hive of Spanish commerce with the Indies; they devour it and deprive Spaniards of profits. They are not the owners of the capital they employ but merely factors. They assemble all the silver from Peru, silver which ought to be employed in purchasing from the fleet at Portobello; but they do not in fact employ it there, with the result that there are no buyers for Spanish merchandise and it has to be sold off at a loss. Instead the *Peruleros* bring their capital to Spain and buy up merchandise here, sending up prices and ruining the market.[6]

The Seville merchants could not compete with these American capitalists,

[5] See above, pp. 203–4.
[6] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, p. 294, n. 6.

who made direct contact with foreign suppliers and if necessary employed their capital outside of Spain. They represented the determination of Peruvian merchants to dictate the terms of trade, to break the grip of Spanish monopolists on the most valuable market in America, and to give the developing colony the supplies it wanted. And the Peruvians operated from a position of strength, for the *carrera* needed their capital; this was why they received preferential treatment from the crown, especially in the matter of sequestrations, from which they secured either exemption or repayment in silver.

The transatlantic trade came to rely not only on American capital but also on American shipping. By the 1640's American-built vessels comprised at least 40 per cent. of the fleets; they shared first place with foreign vessels, and were much more numerous than Spanish. This new inroad into the Spanish monopoly tipped the balance still more towards America. It was made possible by the development of a shipbuilding industry in America, one of the soundest growth industries in the New World and another outlet for American and Spanish capital.

Havana was the greatest centre of American shipbuilding, producing about 75 per cent. of American vessels employed in the transatlantic trade.[7] Cuba was favoured by local abundance of raw materials, including excellent timber; the island was also a strategic base of Caribbean defence and of the homeward-bound silver fleets, for which it offered repair facilities. The first major stimulus to Cuban shipbuilding was the conquest and occupation of Florida (1565–74), for which it provided most of the vessels; between 1572 and 1590 Cuba built a great number of frigates. It then graduated to heavy galleons, and in the period 1608–30 orders multiplied, placed partly by Spanish merchants for their transatlantic fleets and partly by the state for the escorting *armadas*. From about 1620 Cuba had to import timber from neighbouring islands and the mainland to supplement its own resources. For naval stores—iron, nails, rigging, pitch, tar and hemp—its shipyards relied on imports from Europe via Seville. In the course of the seventeenth century, however, Cuba came to procure these supplies direct from northern Europe.[8] The Spanish government, now relying more on American than on Spanish shipyards, had to open breaches in the monopoly to expedite the supply of naval stores to America. In 1608, for example, having placed orders in the Havana yards for galleons for the *Armada de Barlovento*, it concluded a contract with prominent Antwerp businessmen, Denis and Jacob Lhermit, for the supply of naval stores direct from the Baltic to Havana; in return for this

[7] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, p. 667.
[8] *Ibid.*, viii, 1, p. 566, n. 3.

they received the right to trade with Havana, from which apparently they profited beyond all permission.[9]

While other American shipyards did not achieve the Atlantic stature of Havana, they built for local trade and navigation and thus contributed to the growth of an independent American economy. Maracaibo developed a shipbuilding industry precisely because its shores were neglected by transatlantic shipping which found them difficult to navigate; local shipyards were established in the sixteenth century to cater for local needs, producing small vessels suitable for coastal navigation in the Caribbean. Maracaibo had good access to supplies of pitch in its hinterland and to timber in the hills of Mérida. It profited from the growth of the tobacco and cacao trades, which brought in further capital for investment in a merchant marine. Its vessels increased in size and by the late 1630's it was building up to 180 tons, specialising in a Dutch rather than a Spanish type of vessel; one which was extremely navigable, and combined great cargo capacity with shallow draught. Cartagena was another secondary centre of shipbuilding. Its yards developed in the second half of the sixteenth century primarily for repair work on the Tierra Firme fleet and small defence contracts, such as construction of galleys for anti-corsair patrols. But its real growth began in the early seventeenth century, again in response to the recession in Spanish shipyards. It now built large galleons for the transatlantic run, and by mid-century was producing vessels of over 600 tons.[10]

These developments did not go unnoticed. In Spain there was considerable prejudice against American shipbuilding, and jaundiced comments on its high costs, its poor quality, and above all its danger as an instrument of economic independence. The first criticism was exaggerated, the second untrue. But the third was accurate enough—the balance of Atlantic shipbuilding had now moved decisively from east to west, from Spain to America.

Isolated from transatlantic shipping, Pacific navigation necessarily depended on local shipyards. These built vessels of a Spanish Atlantic type, generally smaller but including galleons—three-masted vessels with high sides and seaworthy features. Panama had shipyards almost from its foundation, and by the 1530's the industry had reached sizeable proportions, profiting from local supplies of timber and the demand of the Pacific coastal trade. At the beginning of the seventeenth century it was building small vessels between 45 and 130 tons. Realejo in Nicaragua had even better reserves of raw materials. It could draw on a variety of suitable timber from forests near the coast; it had access to adequate deposits of *brea* (pitch); and local *pita* and *cabuya* fibres were manufactured into cables and cordage on the nearby

[9] *Ibid.*, i, 205–6; v, 1622 A, n. 2.

[10] *Ibid.*, viii, 1, pp. 1033, 1037–38.

island of Puna.[11] By the mid-sixteenth century Realejo had outstripped Panama and was producing vessels up to 700 tons for the trans-Pacific run to Manila.[12]

But the best, the largest and the most numerous vessels on the Pacific coast came from Guayaquil. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the yards on the River Guayas became one of the most active shipbuilding centres in the Hispanic world, stimulated by defence contracts, the needs of the Pacific coastal trade, and the demand for galleons for the trans-Pacific route. Guayaquil, a town of about 200 Spaniards, had exceptional resources. In the tropical forests of its hinterland there were vast reserves of timber, linked to the coast by a labyrinth of navigable rivers; at nearby Piura deposits of *copey* yielded tar and pitch to supplement imports from Nicaragua; at Porto Viejo the *cabuya* fibre provided a good substitute for hemp; from the inland river port of Chimbo came sail cloth; and copper was imported from Chile. At Guayaquil therefore Spanish technique worked almost entirely on American material. The only supplies which its yards had to import from Spain were hardware, nails and anchors, for no iron-ore deposits were then exploited in America; these were a major item in the industry's costs but one which it could afford.[13] From about 1610, in response to Dutch penetration of the Pacific, Peru increased its defence expenditure, and Guayaquil received a series of substantial contracts for large warships. In the course of 1616–20 the Lima treasury placed orders amounting to 25·8 million maravedis, the equivalent of 12·3 per cent. of government funds remitted to Spain; from that date the figures remained fairly constant; in 1641–45 naval orders amounted to 36·2 million maravedis, 8 per cent. of remittances to Spain.[14] In the second half of the century, however, Peruvian investment in defence increased still further and ate more ruthlessly into remittances to Spain.[15] Shipbuilding at Guayaquil therefore became a major industry, absorbing state as well as private capital, and stimulating the local economy.

Investment in shipbuilding, however, was only one aspect of America's self-sufficiency in defence. Military and naval defence in Mexico and Peru were financed out of the local treasuries; this involved heavy expenditure on fortifications, garrisons, warships and crews. In addition these two viceroyalties were responsible for the defence costs of the rest of America, in the form of *situados* (subsidies, primarily for defence) assigned to those parts of

[11] Woodrow Borah, *Early Colonial Trade and Navigation between Mexico and Peru* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1954), p. 5.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 65–66.

[13] A Guayaquil-built galleon cost 300,000 pesos, rising to 500,000 in the later seventeenth century; see Emilio Romero, *Historia económica del Perú* (Buenos Aires, 1949), p. 151.

[14] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, pp. 1089, 1168–69.

[15] See below, pp. 242–3.

the empire which were strategically important but lacked the resources to provide for themselves. Peru was responsible for defence in the *mar del Sur*, and also subsidised Chile, Panama and distant Cumaná. New Spain provided the *situados* for the coasts and islands in the Caribbean from Florida to Paria, and also for the Philippines. In 1664, for example, Lima was instructed to provide 105,150 pesos a year for the military defences of Panama; in 1673 this was raised to 275,314 pesos. A subsidy of 212,000 ducats a year for the army in Chile was also charged on the viceroyalty.[16] New Spain had equally heavy obligations; by the mid 1630's it already supported defence charges of more than 400,000 pesos, and this steadily increased in the course of the century.

America was more than self-sufficient in defence. It also contributed to Atlantic defence. The *Armada de Barlovento*, overtly a Caribbean squadron, was charged on the New Spain treasury and subsidised by the *consulado* of Mexico. But in fact, as has been seen, it was invariably diverted to convoy duty between Spain and America, and on more than one occasion was assigned for long periods to the home fleet.[17] This simply meant that Seville would not or could not provide the revenue for convoy defence, and America had to come to its rescue, paying three-quarters of the cost of defending transatlantic communications.[18] This was further evidence of the shift of economic power within the Hispanic world. The merchants of America, who already controlled the Pacific trade between Acapulco and Manila, were becoming increasingly dominant in the Atlantic route.

Defence expenditure is not normally regarded as an instrument of great economic growth. But it can have vital importance for developing countries; it amounts in effect to a form of economic aid from the metropolis to its dependencies. This is roughly what happened in Spanish America: imperial defence contracts went to the colonies not to Spain. These contracts, of course, had a peculiar feature, for they were financed from capital which America itself created through its bullion production. They were another example of American capital being invested in the American economy. And they were a stimulus to growth, activating not only shipyards, copper-foundries, and arms workshops, but also secondary supply bases servicing these industries. They provided increased employment in the various sectors, and indirectly they gave a boost to agriculture, for workers, crews and garrisons had to be fed as well as clothed and paid.

[16] See below, p. 244.
[17] See above, p. 193.
[18] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, v, 420.

2. Mexico: From Mining to Agriculture

The Mexican economy was never exclusively orientated towards mining. The colony began a balanced economic development with the first generation of settlers, and by 1540–60 it was enjoying a boom in the rapid expansion of European agriculture and the growth of industry. European-type production, especially in raising sheep and silk, weaving of textiles, and manufacture of furniture and clothing, gave the colony a wide base of prosperity. Production was modest in its proportions, but it met much of the local demand and helped to keep prices low by competing with imports from Spain. There was even a surplus for export in sugar, textiles, clothing, furniture and household articles, and other manufactures. Compared with other colonies, including Peru, this development involved a much larger Spanish population, with more farmers and craftsmen, and it brought more of the Indian population into European-type production. Between 1531 and 1580, for example, silk raising, especially in the Mixteca, expanded rapidly and gave rise to a silk manufacturing industry in centres like Mexico City, Puebla and Antequera, producing for the home market and for export to Peru.[19] By the early seventeenth century, however, silk raising, like other sectors of the Mexican economy, was in severe recession, hit by competition from Chinese silks, by the government's policy of restricting competition and economic independence in the interests of Spain, and above all by the decrease of the Indian population.[20]

The white population of Mexico steadily increased, from 63,000 in 1570 to 125,000 in 1646.[21] In Mexico City the growth was relatively greater, from 18,000 to 48,000; whereas in 1570 the capital's white population comprised 28·5 per cent. of that of the whole colony, by the 1640's it was 38·4 per cent., evidence of the growth of a great European-style city, a centre of production but above all of consumption. The upper ranks of the white population formed a colonial aristocracy which was drawn from two groups, *encomenderos* and merchants. The *encomenderos* were descendants of the conquerors and others who had earned royal favour; they lived on the income from tribute or labour supplied by the Indians who had been commended to them. By the end of the sixteenth century many of them had begun to supplement possession of Indians with the other great mark of nobility, possession of land, and to associate their *encomiendas* with *haciendas*. These were the classical aristocracy. They were joined by many who made their fortunes in Atlantic and

[19] Woodrow Borah, *Silk Raising in Colonial Mexico* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1943), pp. 32–38.
[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 85–101; see below, p. 245.
[21] Woodrow Borah, *New Spain's Century of Depression* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1951), p. 18.

Pacific trade, men like Simon de Haro, prior of the *consulado* of Mexico in 1650, whose fortune was estimated at 600,000 pesos.[22] Capital earned in commerce was often invested in agrarian property, for the Mexican merchant, like his Spanish counterpart, sought social status in landowning. And some capital found its way into mining. The actual mining proprietor was not normally a wealthy capitalist or at the summit of the social hierarchy. There was wealth in mining, of course, but this wealth did not go exclusively to mineowners and prospectors; much of it went to those who supplied labour and finance, and who were to be found among the colonial aristocracy, once or twice removed from actual operations.

While the white population was increasing, the Indians were vanishing. The Indian population of central Mexico, which may have been as high as 25 million in 1519, decreased from 16,871,408 in 1532, to 2,649,573 in 1568, to 1,372,228 in 1595, to 1,069,255 in 1608.[23] In the Valley of Mexico alone the native population fell from 1,500,000 on the eve of the conquest to 325,000 in 1570, to 70,000 in the mid-seventeenth century.[24] This demographic calamity, 'one of the great catastrophes in the history of the human race', was the result of a number of factors, chief among which was epidemic disease, particularly the scourges of 1545–48 and 1576–81. The Mexican Indians were victims of imported diseases against which they had no immunity; the greatest killers were smallpox, measles, typhus and typhoid, though malaria and influenza also took their toll. Indian resistance to disease, however, was weakened by the shock of conquest and subjugation, by ecological changes attendant on the disruption of their economy, and by deteriorating food supplies. The native inhabitants lost some of their land and water resources to the Spaniards; the latter imported cattle and sheep which swarmed over the land left vacant by the diminishing Indians, and often invaded the reserves of land needed by the native system of field rotation; finally the diversion of scarce water supplies to Spanish farms, ranches and flour mills greatly handicapped Indian agriculture.[25] If the Indians abandoned the land to seek a livelihood elsewhere, in mines and *obrajes* (factories), inhuman conditions

[22] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, p. 733; on the social structure of the colony see L. N. McAlister, 'Social Structure and Social Change in New Spain', *H.A.H.R.*, xliii (1963), 349–70.

[23] Woodrow Borah and Sherburne F. Cook, *The Aboriginal Population of Central Mexico on the Eve of the Spanish Conquest* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1963), pp. 4, 88; Cook and Borah, *The Indian Population of Central Mexico* 1531–1610 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960), p. 48; Borah and Cook, *The Population of Central Mexico in* 1548: *A Critical Analysis of the Suma de visitas de pueblos* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960). See also A. Rosenblat, *La población de América en 1492* (Mexico 1967).

[24] Charles Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule. A History of the Indians of the Valley of Mexico* 1519–1810 (Stanford and London, 1964), pp. 136–41.

[25] Lesley Byrd Simpson, *Exploitation of Land in Central Mexico in the Sixteenth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1952).

wrought havoc on bodies and spirits already enfeebled by destitution. Leaderless and increasingly landless, the Indians were reduced to a subordinate position, payers of tribute and suppliers of labour. They sought refuge in alcohol: 'few peoples in the whole of history were more prone to drunkenness than the Indians of the Spanish colony'.[26] Conditions improved but slowly. After the great demographic tragedy, the downward trend was reversed about 1650, and the Indian population began to increase again in the second half of the century.[27]

Human losses on this scale were bound to affect the economic structure of the colony. A growing settler population encountered fewer Indians to work for its needs, especially after the precipitous population fall during the epidemic of 1576–81. Labour shortage affected all sectors of the economy—agriculture, mining and manufacture. Fewer hands meant harder work and ruthless competition for those who remained; and new forms of labour recruitment had to be devised. Meanwhile, from the 1570's to about the middle of the seventeenth century, while the colony adjusted itself to its profound labour crisis and until the Indian population began to increase, New Spain endured a prolonged economic crisis.[28]

Mexico can be broadly divided into two parts, the humid south and the dry north, with the frontier between the two some 100 miles north of Mexico City. This was also more or less a demographic division: the south had a relatively dense population of mild and sedentary Indians, while the tribes of the north were scattered, nomadic, wild and indomitable. Northern Mexico was the mining zone; the south was agricultural.

The Puebla region specialised in production of grain and maize, supplying the transatlantic fleets and the Mexico City market. Cuernavaca was one of the principal sugar zones; sugar production in Mexico never attained the importance of the industry in Hispaniola, but two cycles can be identified, the first to 1570, followed by recession induced by the diversion of diminishing labour supply to the mining boom, and a second period of growth from about 1618.[29] Cuernavaca was also the centre of indigo production, radiating to other parts of Mexico. The Mixteca, with its relatively large Indian population, produced salt, cotton and maize. But it was also the chief centre of raw silk, and of cochineal-which, after silver, was the second most important

[26] Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule*, p. 409.

[27] See however José Miranda, 'La población indigena de México en el siglo XVII', *Historia Mexicana*, xii (1962–63), 182–89, who conjectures that the reversal of the downward trend began in the 1620's and 1630's.

[28] This is the brilliantly argued hypothesis of Woodrow Borah, *New Spain's Century of Depression*.

[29] François Chevalier, *La formation des grands domaines au Mexique. Terre et société aux XVI^e–XVII^e siècles* (Paris, 1952), p. 96.

export of the colony. Further south still, in Oaxaca, was the territory of the Marquesado del Valle, the immense fief granted to Cortés. European crops and livestock had been quickly introduced by the agents of the Cortés estate, and maize was also cultivated. Oaxaca, like the Mixteca, produced cochineal for export. This, in brief, was the economy of the south. It was severely disrupted by the Indian depopulation. Shortage of labour caused a steady fall in food production; the urban centres, foci of the growing white population, suffered decrease in supplies and, from the 1570's, serious shortage.[30] In 1595 Viceroy Velasco reported gloomily to Philip II: 'All supplies are becoming scarce and are rising in price so fast that before many years this land will experience as great a dearth and want as now exists in Spain'.[31] The measures adopted to meet the crisis constituted in effect an attempt to impose a system of rationing. After 1595 the failure of crop production to keep pace with a still rising white population brought down living standards and reduced the poor whites to the margin of subsistence. And agriculture had to compete for labour with mining.

Mexico's mining zone lay substantially in the north, in New Galicia, which included the most important mines of all, notably Zacatecas and San Luis Potosí, and New Viscaya, whose principal settlements were Durango and Santa Barbara, supplemented by a later strike at Parral.[32] These settlements were remote islands in a sea of hostile and rebel tribes. The mining zone was a frontier, whose expansion promoted pacification and colonisation, it is true, but only with great difficulty and at heavy cost. For the further north the mining frontier advanced the more hostile the Indians became. San Luis Potosí, the richest strike of all after Zacatecas, was only worked relatively late, in 1591, after the viceroy had negotiated a truce with the Chichimecs; this permitted the establishment of a colony of friendly Tlaxcalans to begin operations. When, after 1600, northern expansion opened up new mines, these were expensive to sustain, and they invariably suffered from shortage of troops and arms. In the northernmost mining district of Parral a case of cannibalism was reported in 1652 when the rebellious Chichimecs were alleged to have eaten a Jesuit missionary.[33]

Mexican silver production reached its peak in the 1590's. After this many mineowners found returns insufficient to cover labour and equipment costs, and they were forced to cut back on investments. But boom was not followed immediately by depression. In Guanajuato mining production did

[30] Borah, *New Spain's Century of Depression*, pp. 22–26. [31] *Ibid.*, p. 23.
[32] Robert C. West, *The Mining Community in Northern New Spain: The Parral Mining District* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1949), pp. 10–14.
[33] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, p. 776.

not decrease until 1632.[34] Zacatecas sustained its output even longer. Zacatecas provided about one-third of Mexican silver, so its performance was important. Production rose steadily from 1570 to the 1620's, and continued to increase until 1636 before falling back to levels not much lower than those registered in the 1580's and 1590's.[35] The depression was caused not by labour shortage, for the 5,000 workers needed by Zacatecas were supplied from Indian migrants, and production here rose precisely in the years when demographic depression was at its worst. It was caused in part by mercury shortage, when the crown diverted Almadén mercury to Peru and then stopped supplying mercury on credit. The slump, when it came, was severe but not catastrophic. After the mid 1630's the days of great mining fortunes were past; new bonanzas were rare and had to await the following century. By about 1690 depression had settled over almost the whole of the industry, though a few places like Parral, which had enjoyed a late boom from 1630, survived longer than others.[36] In the course of the century a number of mines were completely abandoned, and miners retreated into their rural estates or sought alternative income from purchase of office.[37]

The key to mining performance was manpower. The recruitment and feeding of workers, in a zone which was largely semi-desert, were perennial problems for Mexican mining, and account for the relatively small labour force employed in the industry.[38] But mining was a heavy consumer of labour. The appalling conditions of work, lack of safety precautions, foul air, high temperatures, heavy carrying tasks, and mercurial poisoning, all caused the physical deterioration of workers—or absenteeism. The crown acceded to the colonists' demands for Indian labour by sanctioning *repartimiento* (forced wage labour), which was applied to mining as well as agriculture. But this could only supply a rotating and unskilled labour force, whereas from the 1570's the industry was confronted by greater technical problems associated with drainage, deeper shafts, and the amalgamation process, all of which required skilled and permanent labourers. Moreover, the richest mines—Zacatecas, San Luis, Durango, Guanajuato, Parral—were situated in northern

[34] D. A. Brading, *Miners and Merchants in Bourbon Mexico* 1763–1810 (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 8–12; D. A. Brading and Harry E. Cross, 'Colonial Silver Mining: Mexico and Peru', *HAHR*, 52, 4 (1972), pp. 545–79.
[35] P. J. Bakewell, *Silver Mining and Society in Colonial Mexico: Zacatecas* 1546–1700 (Cambridge, 1971), p. 226.
[36] Modesto Bargalló, *La minería y la metalurgía en la América Española durante la época colonial* (Mexico, 1955), pp. 210–12; West, *op. cit.*, pp. 12–14.
[37] Chevalier, *La formation des grands domaines au Mexique*, pp. 178–80.
[38] Even Zacatecas in 1570 only had 300 Spaniards, 500 slaves; in 1605 it had about 1,000 Europeans; see J. H. Parry, *The Audiencia of New Galicia in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1948), p. 186.

territory where the nomadic and hostile Indian population was quite unadaptable to *repartimiento*. The northern mines, therefore, always tended to prefer free labour, tempted from central and southern Mexico by higher wages and then frequently held to employment by debt peonage.

These difficulties were worsened by the demographic catastrophe which overtook the Indians, especially from the 1570's. The depleted task force was now spread more thinly over the various sectors of the economy, and subjected to relatively greater demands. The mines at Pachuca in central Mexico, for example, which before the great epidemic of 1576 had a *repartimiento* quota of 1,108 Indians a week, had only 57 in 1661.[39] The crown was forced to impose a policy of labour curtailment and rationing, with priority to essential sectors such as agriculture and mining.[40] Decrees of the late sixteenth century prohibited the use of Indians in certain industries considered particularly detrimental to their health, notably sugar processing and cloth production. And attempts were made to prevent the transfer of Indians over long distances, which ruled out the northernmost areas. The policy was not entirely consistent and could be circumvented, and mining simply competed as best as it could with the labour demands of agriculture, public works and building.

The poor technical performance and now the utter decrease of *repartimiento* labour forced miners to turn to other sources of supply. One of these was Negro slaves. Between 1519 and 1650 Mexico imported at least 120,000 slaves, two-thirds of all the Africans shipped to Spanish America.[41] The Negro population grew from 20,000 in 1570 to 35,000 in 1650 with 100,000 mulattos and zambos. This was in direct response to Indian depopulation. The Negroes were directed to plantations and ranches, to sugar refineries and textile factories (where Indian labour came to be prohibited), and to the service sector of the towns. Some of them also went to the northern mines, though not in great numbers. Slaves were a heavy capital investment; at the beginning of the seventeenth century a Negro slave cost 400 pesos, the equivalent of about eight months' wages for a *repartimiento* Indian.[42] They had already suffered physical deterioration since leaving Africa, and they were unfitted for work in the dry, cold climate of the northern plateau; in any case they hated mining and fiercely resisted it.[43] For these reasons Negro

[39] Borah, *New Spain's Century of Depression*, p. 26.
[40] *Ibid.*, pp. 34–36.
[41] Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México*, 1519–1810 (Mexico, 1946), pp. 199–222; see also Rolando Mellafe, *La esclavitud en Hispanoamérica* (Buenos Aires, 1964).
[42] Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule*, p. 244.
[43] David M. Davidson, 'Negro Slave Control and Resistance in Colonial Mexico, 1519–1650', *H.A.H.R.*, xlvi (1966), 235–53.

slaves never formed more than a small percentage of the mining labour force: at the beginning of the seventeenth century they composed only 6 per cent. of the total labour force at Zacatecas, and 10 per cent. at Pachuca.[44] There were other slaves, too, the so-called *gente de guerra*, rebellious Indians captured in war, and these probably outnumbered Negroes in the mining industry, though again they were not numerous.

The mines, therefore, relied more and more on free labour, Indians from central Mexico, mulattos and mestizos, attracted by the high salaries and even more perhaps by assurance of food and clothing. Free labourers were more expensive—4 reales a day compared with the 1 real paid to *repartimiento* Indians— but their technical performance was better and the miners preferred them, frequently holding them by debt peonage. By 1600 they outnumbered *repartimiento* Indians in most mines, and by 1650 they had almost displaced them. At Zacatecas the entire Indian labour force consisted of free workers, and at Parral almost all wage earning workers were freely hired.[45] The employment of free labour, of course, could not solve the problem of diminishing labour supply. It merely meant that the mines were competing more keenly for what labour was available, particularly against agriculture, which had to feed a growing white population and also drew heavily on the free labour market.

The effects of labour shortage were more pronounced as they coincided with other difficulties besetting the mining industry, particularly the upward trend of costs. Whereas miners received a fixed price for their bullion—1 peso an ounce—they were faced with rising costs for labour, food and equipment. They had campaigned successfully to get the *quinto*, the royal tax on silver, reduced to a tenth; they then sought to evade even the reduced taxation. To get their profits quickly and to avoid taking their product long distances to the nearest *caja real* for stamping and assaying, miners adopted the practice of selling their silver at the mine direct to merchants, often under price. With the product in their grasp merchants kept back a portion from registration and taxation and so retained a highly valuable trading commodity. Outside capitalists thus came to exert a powerful control over the industry, for they also handled supplies to the mines and frequently advanced loans to the miners against future yield. In the mid 1630's the crown ceased to distribute mercury on credit, and many miners who had accumulated debts were unable to meet their obligations and abandoned mining. This development also favoured financiers in Mexico City and strengthened their hold over the industry. Once credit for mercury was controlled from Mexico City, it was allocated only to the most productive mines and the marginal

[44] West, *op. cit.*, p. 53.
[45] Bakewell, *op. cit.*, pp. 121–9; West, *op. cit.*, pp. 48–51.

producers were forced out. The profits from mining, therefore, were largely escaping the control of the miners themselves, with the result that they had insufficient margin for reinvestment at a time when operations were posing new problems.

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the amalgamation process of refining silver, which had first been adopted in the 1550's, was employed in most mines, and about two-thirds of the Mexican product were thus processed. Amalgamation revolutionised mining, for it forced a yield from low-grade ores, precisely when these were becoming more frequent.[46] But amalgamation needed additional equipment and labour, and it depended on a number of ingredients, particularly mercury, which were scarce and expensive. The exhaustion of rich ores near the surface led to deeper mining—down to 400 feet—for lower-grade ores, a development encouraged by the amalgamation process. But as mining went deeper costs increased, and so did technical difficulties. Shaft reinforcement, illumination, ventilation, and haulage operations all became more complicated and more expensive. The greatest problem was flooding, for drainage technique was primitive in the extreme; and some miners found drainage so expensive that they preferred to abandon their mines. Finally, amalgamation demanded finely ground ores; grinding machinery, and the numerous mules needed to drive it, became an additional expense. In short, mining now required heavy capital investment for an end product whose yield was steadily diminishing.

Costs were further inflated by the expense of procuring supplies. To some degree mining settlements were self-sufficient units, for the industry stimulated local stock ranching and grain farming as proximate bases of supply.[47] The northern plateau provided a favourable environment for livestock, which multiplied enormously in the period 1560–1620. Local ranches, sometimes owned by miners as an additional investment, supplied mules for motor-force, hides and tallow for mining operations, and meat for the labourers.[48] But farming did not keep pace with ranching, and some settlements had to import grain supplies. And they all relied on imports for tropical products such as sugar, for wine, textiles, hardware, and other manufactures. Trade between Mexico City, the entrepôt for European imports and locally produced goods, and the northern mining settlements was one of the principal commercial activities of the colony. According to an estimate of 1673, some 600,000 pesos' worth of merchandise was sent annually from the capital to Parral.[49] The mines had to compete at a long distance with other

[46] Bargalló, *op. cit.*, pp. 107–33, 203–14.
[47] West, *op. cit.*, pp. 57–91.
[48] Chevalier, *La formation des grands domaines au Mexique*, pp. 167–68.
[49] West, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

sectors for these supplies, not all of which were abundant; and they were faced with heavy transport costs, for the northern settlements were two to three months' journey from the capital.

But it was mercury which posed the greatest supply problem. World sources of mercury were—and remain—few in number. Through a striking coincidence of circumstances Spain possessed not only the greatest silver mines in the world but also two rich and workable deposits of mercury, the mines at Almadén in the peninsula and Huancavelica in Peru. The Mexican mines required about 5,000 to 6,000 quintals of mercury a year; consumption grew from 263 quintals a year in 1559, to 1,387 in 1569, to 6,557 in 1589, and varied between 3,000 and 3,700 in 1597–1606.[50] Up to about 1580 they were supplied from the total production of both Almadén and Huancavelica; subsequently, owing to the increasing demand of Peru's own silver mines, Mexico had to rely on the sole product of Almadén. In some years Mexico even had to compete for Almadén's exports with Peru; yet Zacatecas alone, in 1612–18, when its output was still forging ahead, consumed 1,180 to 2,330 quintals of mercury a year.[51] Mexico's mining fortunes were linked to Almadén at a time when the latter's production had passed its peak of sustained growth. Output fluctuated from 4,526 quintals in 1622, to 6,936 in 1624, to 4,797 in 1631; by the 1670's it was averaging only 2,000 a year.[52] According to miners, the high price of mercury—its distribution and sale were a state monopoly—was a major item pushing up their costs. Chronologically, however, the problem of mercury supply was a relatively late factor in the mining depression; it simply placed an additional burden on an already enfeebled industry.

As Mexico's first mining cycle drew to a close, the colony's economy was re-orientated towards agriculture for subsistence purposes, and to a lesser extent manufacturing for the home market. And Mexican society was reintegrated around an institution which was to dominate it for three centuries to come, the *hacienda*, the great landed estate, the characteristic base of a new colonial aristocracy. The *hacienda* emerged in a period of economic crisis when the Indians could no longer support the *encomenderos* or the towns. It was a means of escape from direct dependence on the weakened Indian communities for food supplies. The estates, of course, still relied on the Indians for labour, but the Indians could be better organised for commercialised food production on estates under Spanish supervision than when they were left to produce food in their own communities.[53]

[50] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, pp. 1958–80.
[51] Bargalló, *op. cit.*, p. 273.
[52] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 2, 2, p. 1973; on the reasons for Almadén's difficulties, linked to the waning fortunes of the Fuggers, see Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 144–46.
[53] Borah, *New Spain's Century of Depression*, p. 32.

The origin of the *hacienda* can be traced back to the land grants which the Spanish crown made to the conquistadores and their offspring for services rendered. These grants were limited in size, but the grantees tended to ignore the limitations. From the 1570's they began to occupy land vacated by the vanishing Indians, with or without title from the crown; they also began to encroach on areas still being worked by Indian communities, and to add to their territorial wealth by Indian land procured through extortion or purchase.[54] The process was hastened by the demands of the mining settlements for food supplies; each *real de minas* needed its tributary stock ranches and grain farms in close proximity, and the ranch–mine complex became the typical unit of settlement in northern Mexico. Then, when the first mining cycle ended, the miners themselves were forced to look to the land for a living, and many of them became *hacendados*. The formation of great estates was further promoted by the tendency of *encomenderos* to transfer their *encomiendas*, which were strictly speaking not land grants, into farms, especially when their income from tribute decreased with the depopulation of the Indians.[55] Finally, the growth of the great *hacienda* was stimulated by a motive which lay deep in the Iberian mentality: Spaniards and creoles alike wanted large estates for the sake of size alone and the social prestige that accrued therefrom, for landownership was linked with nobility and 'purity of blood'.[56] Thus, by one means or another, by the middle of the seventeenth century a very large part of Mexico was in the hands of the *latifundistas*.

The growth of the large estate, of course, could not in itself solve the basic question of labour. So fierce was the competition from agriculture and other sectors for the diminishing supply of *repartimiento* labour that employers turned to another means of securing workers—free, or ostensibly free, wage labour.[57] Under this system the worker hired himself out to an employer for wages and could leave at any time. In practice such labour had a tendency to turn into debt bondage, the worker being bound to serve by advances of money, food and clothing, and unable to leave the employer until he had worked out his debt. But the new labour system also had compensations from which the Indians benefited. Competition for labour in a free market resulted in higher wages and better living conditions; this accounts perhaps

[54] Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule*, pp. 274–76; Chevalier, *La formation des grands domaines au Mexique*, pp. 113, 127–28.

[55] Lesley Byrd Simpson, *The Ecomienda in New Spain: The Beginnings of Spanish Mexico* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1950).

[56] Chevalier, *La formation des grands domaines au Mexique*, p. 231. This fine and readable work on the formation of the latifundia has also been published in English: *Land and Society in Colonial Mexico. The Great Hacienda*, trans. Alvin Eustis, ed. Lesley Byrd Simpson (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1963).

[57] Borah, *New Spain's Century of Depression*, pp. 36–42.

for the higher survival rate among the remnants of the Indian population in the later seventeenth century, and for the eventual reversal of the demographic trend.[58] Moreover, in some aspects the *hacienda* was a benevolent institution, a refuge, a means of livelihood, and an instrument of credit. In later colonial times debt peonage in the Valley of Mexico affected fewer than half the workers on *haciendas*, and there was relative freedom of movement among workers as they went in search of yet bigger advances, attempting 'not to escape but to enlarge the indebtedness'.[59]

The *hacienda* involved not only increasing white domination over land and labour but also over agriculture.[60] On their own land the Indians preferred maize. But Spaniards wanted wheat, and Indian resistance to wheat cultivation simply accelerated the Spanish acquisition of land. In the Valley of Mexico the transition to large-scale enterprise in wheat occurred in the late sixteenth century. Between 1563 and 1602 the number of wheat farms increased about four times and the amount of grain sown about twelve times. In its next stage of advance, between 1580 and 1630, Spanish agriculture moved into Indian crops; large-scale enterprises began commercial production of maize and *pulque* (an intoxicating drink obtained from maguey), competing with Indian production and acquiring control of the markets.

In tropical Mexico the *hacienda* quickly adapted itself to its environment. Indigo production, especially in Yucatán, made great strides and was an important export commodity in the seventeenth century. Sugar cane was even more important. In the sixteenth century the sugar industry underwent an excessive boom, eating into land needed for other crops and ruthlessly consuming Indian labour.[61] Government policy added its weight to natural restraints to cut back the industry. Official preference granted to Caribbean sugar virtually closed the Spanish market to the Mexican product by the end of the sixteenth century. And pressure to restrict the use—or abuse—of Indian workers culminated in a decree (24 November 1601) forbidding even free Indian labour in the refineries and permitting it only in the fields. Although Mexican sugar did not develop into a good export commodity, its domestic performance was highly successful in the seventeenth century and provided further evidence of the colony's self-sufficiency. The principal zones of production were the Cuernavaca basin, Michoacán, the Marquesado del Valle, and Jalapa. Sugar was an industrial as well as an agricultural enterprise. It needed large tracts of fertile land, ample water supply, and

[58] Lesley Byrd Simpson, 'Mexico's Forgotten Century', *Pacific Historical Review*, xxii (1953), 113–21, especially p. 120.

[59] Gibson, *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule*, p. 255.

[60] *Ibid.*, pp. 323–34.

[61] Fernando B. Sandoval, *La industria del azúcar en Nueva España* (Mexico, 1951), pp. 23–44, 45–51.

expensive equipment. Each *hacienda* employed hundreds of Indians and Negroes, to be fed as well as employed, and they became in effect self-contained units of production. Sugar therefore required heavy capital investment; normally it attracted an ample flow of capital, from private sources and religious institutions, usually in the form of mortgage-type loans at 5 per cent. interest.[62]

Yet the typical Mexican *hacienda* was not the farm, nor the sugar estate, but the cattle ranch. In the vast, unpopulated, and semi-arid territories of the north, stock farming was obvious adaptation to environment. To some extent, as has been seen, it expanded with the advance of the mining frontier, and new ranches were established along highways to silver mines, particularly in the environs of Zacatecas and Querétaro.[63] By the early 1580's some 200,000 sheep, 100,000 cattle, and 10,000 horses were grazing on ranges a few miles south of Querétaro. Stock raising was cheaper and needed less Indian labour than crop raising. And it needed vast estates: certain stockmen in the region of Valles had 150,000 cattle, and 20,000 were considered a mere trifle. Each *hacienda* aimed to be self-sufficient. As well as pasturage for their herds and flocks, the cattle barons would try to acquire fertile valley land for raising subsistence crops, and further extend their estates to control water supply from rivers or streams. Stock raising on this scale could be risky for there was always a danger of glut. But normally the rancher had two principal outlets—hides were a good export commodity, and wool was in demand by the colony's own textile industry.

With the collapse of the silver boom, therefore, land became a more important source of income in Mexico. The *hacienda* became a microcosm of Mexico's economic self-sufficiency and of its growing independence. Workers on a *hacienda*, of course, living at subsistence level, did not constitute a consumer market; and the majority of Mexico's peasants did not produce agricultural surpluses or consume urban products. But the *hacienda* was different and could generate further activity, for it needed to import some consumer goods and it provided raw materials for the colony's own production, and for export to urban or to overseas markets. Local self-sufficient economies with their own urban centre could survive independently of the trans-atlantic trade, dealing with other localities in particular commodities, and trading in particular with Mexico City, a market, an entrepôt, a source of capital, a new metropolis.[64]

[62] *Ibid.*, pp. 114–23.

[63] William H. Dusenberry, *The Mexican Mesta. The Administration of Ranching in Colonial Mexico* (Urbana, 1963), pp. 35–39, 174–91; Chevalier, *La formation des grands domaines au Mexique*, p. 141.

[64] William B. Taylor, *Landlord and Peasant in Colonial Oaxaca* (Stanford, 1972), p. 19.

If the new economy denoted 'stagnation' after boom, it was a relatively high plateau of stagnation. While government revenue is not a proof of economic performance, it can be a useful indicator. The revenue of the central treasury in Mexico from taxes and other sources rose steadily to 2·3 million pesos in 1609 and over 3 million in 1623. It fell after 1625 but not substantially.[65] This creates a presumption in favour of sustained economic activity which is not easy to reconcile with a hypothesis of absolute depression. Moreover, an increasing proportion of government income in Mexico remained in the colony or its dependencies for administration, defence and public works, which meant that Mexico's wealth now sustained Mexico rather than Spain. The *almojarifazgo* tax, an index of maritime trade, increased steadily until about 1600, after which there was a slight drop; it spurted again in the period 1626–38, before dropping after 1640. The *alcabala*, an index of internal trade, increased until 1638, to be followed by a slight drop. Public remittances to Spain, it can be inferred, diminished, but this was not simply because of depression; it was because Mexico retained more public revenue for its own purposes, and also because its subsidies to the Philippines grew, from 100,000 pesos a year in 1590 to 500,000 a year by the mid-seventeenth century. These official indices of activity point to a transition from one economic structure to another, from a mining economy to one more widely based. The period of transition was a critical one for the Mexican economy, but it was a crisis of change rather than stagnation.

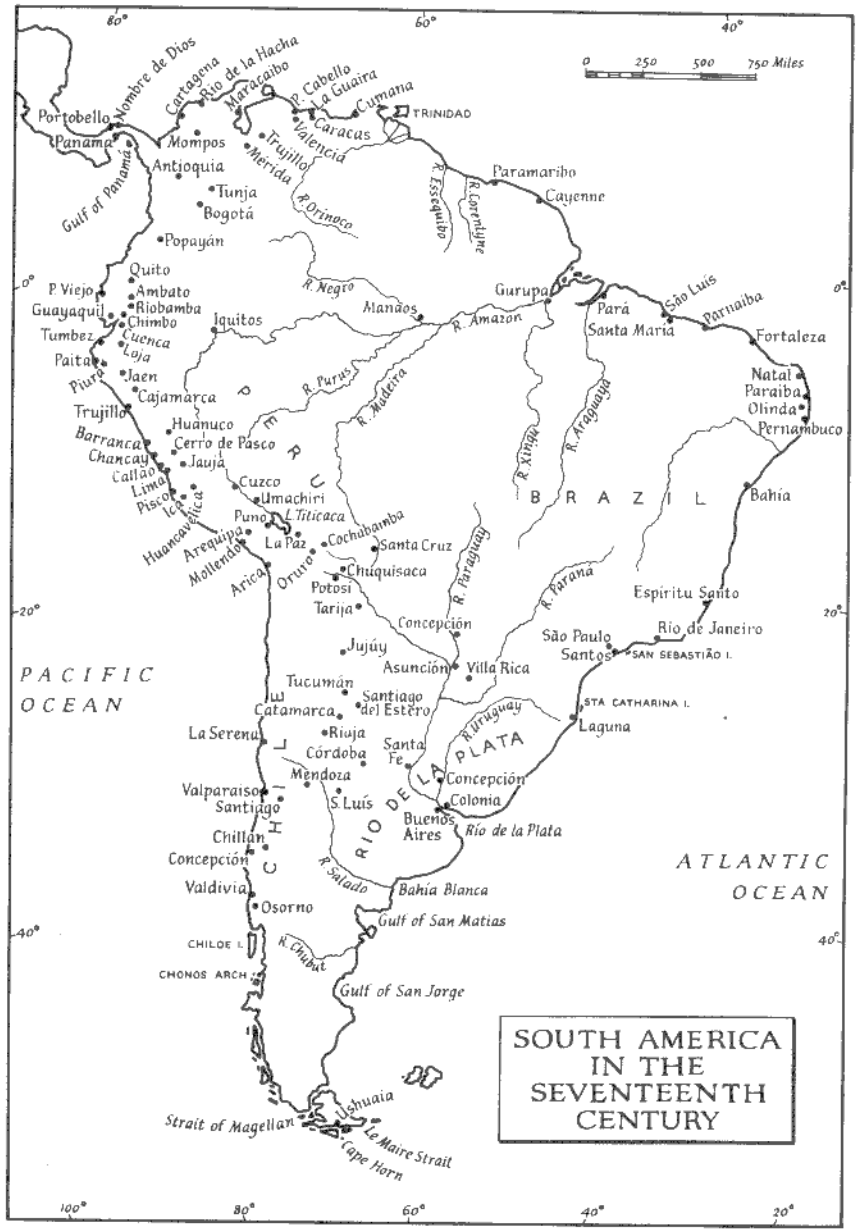
3. Peru: Silver Colony, Silver Metropolis

> Peru, a wealthy and powerful kingdom, with rich mines of silver, gold, mercury, lead, tin and copper. A land endowed with every kind of food, abundant in livestock, agriculture, birds and fish. A land of moderate climate, free of poisonous snakes and wild beasts. A land of many herbs and medicinal plants'.[66]

The anonymous Iberian Jew, writing in the early seventeenth century for his Dutch masters, was aware of his priorities and their implications. In the eyes of the world Peru was a producer of silver, virtually its only export commodity, the monopoly of Spain, the envy of other powers. Yet this was not the whole story. Peru also possessed the resources to service its mining sector and to achieve a high degree of autonomy. And the colony's developing economy began to absorb more of the mining product.

[65] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, pp. 753, 759–67, 799–802.

[66] *Descripción del Virreinato del Perú. Crónica inédita de comienzos del siglo XVII.* Ed. Boleslao Lewin (Rosario, 1958), p. 19.



Peru's white population increased more rapidly than that of Mexico but remained much smaller—25,000 in 1570, 70,000 in 1650.[67] In the same period the colony's Negroes, mestizos and mulattos increased from 60,000 to 130,000. Meanwhile the Indian population diminished, though far less disastrously than in Mexico. The Peruvian Indians, who may have numbered some 8 million on the eve of the conquest, decreased to 2.5 million in 1560, to 1.3 million in 1590.[68] Peru, too, suffered relentless and devastating epidemics in the sixteenth century, and to these may be added other explanations for the Indian demographic collapse—the social disruption caused by the conquest, the heavy mortality suffered in rebellion in the 1530's, the subsequent massive dispersals, especially after 1570, and the *mita*, the forced recruitment for mining and other tasks which, although it affected relatively few Indians, caused many more to flee from Spanish jurisdiction.[69] Yet the shock of conquest was less traumatic for the Peruvian Indians than for their Mexican counterparts. They were already conditioned to imperial domination and to working for sovereign masters; and they had a well-developed agrarian economy capable of sustaining workers. It is difficult to measure the relative demands of the Incas and the Spaniards on the working population.[70] Work in the mines was new, at any rate on the scale demanded by Spaniards. It was also very punishing. But so had been the almost superhuman architectural tasks imposed by the Incas. Whereas before the Peruvian Indians had toiled to build temples of the Sun, now they laboured to satisfy the bullion demands of the world economy.

The conquerors and their descendants, as in Mexico, were assigned Indians in *encomienda*, which gave them title to tribute and in effect to labour. The *encomienda* conferred, if not nobility, social status and prestige, and it was regarded as a mark of natural aristocracy, to be secured if possible in perpetuity. In the course of the seventeenth century, however, the Peruvian *encomenderos* entered a period of crisis. To counter the feudal implications of the institution, the crown tended to refuse requests for grants in perpetuity, to

[67] These figures exclude Upper Peru, for which the same source gives 7,000 in 1570, 50,000 in 1650; for source see note 68.

[68] Angel Rosenblat, *La población indígena y el mestizaje en América* (2 vols., Buenos Aires, 1954), i, 59, 76–77, 88, 225. David N. Cook, however, gives a total of 6 million in 1531, 350,000 in 1750, in *América colonial. Población y economía* (Rosario, 1965). See especially note 69.

[69] On the 'destructuration' of Indian society, with new estimates and explanations of demographic collapse, see Nathan Wachtel, *The Vision of the Vanquished. The Spanish Conquest of Peru through Indian Eyes 1530–1570* (Hassocks, 1977), pp. 86–98.

[70] See however John Howland Rowe, 'The Incas under Spanish Colonial Institutions', *H.A.H.R.*, xxxvii (1957), 155–99, a key, though perhaps partial, study, which concludes that Spanish rule over the Peruvian Indians carried 'economic exploitation and personal degradation . . . to an extreme'; for a good account of Spanish government over the Indians at district officer level see Guillermo Lohmann Villena, *El corregidor de indios en el Perú bajo los Austrias* (Madrid, 1957).

seek the reversion of *encomiendas*, and to diminish their economic benefits by heavier taxation.[71] Far from keeping up with inflation, income from *encomiendas* decreased in value and in security. The *encomenderos* were driven to seek an alternative source of income, in land, office, or even commerce. While the original aristocracy became less disdainful of commerce—their participation was usually indirect and dissimulated—merchants acquired aspirations to nobility. Commerce, as long as it was wholesale, was no more an obstacle to social status in Peru than it was in Spain. The *consulado* of Lima, unlike that of Seville, extended its jurisdiction to retail as well as wholesale merchants; but it was the latter who provided the prior and consuls and monopolised voting rights.[72] An income acquired from large-scale maritime trade was socially respectable. It could also be invested in further advancement. Such was the crown's need for money, especially in the reign of Philip IV, that it sold *hábitos* and titles of nobility for hard cash; in the late seventeenth century the price of a title was 30,000 pesos, somewhat less if it was for one life only.[73] Merchants were more likely to have this amount of capital than were *encomenderos* or landowners. According to an observer in the early seventeenth century, 'There are merchants in Lima who have fortunes of a million pesos, many with 500,000, and very many with 100,000. Very few of these wealthy people have retail shops. They export their capital and employ it abroad, in Spain, Mexico and other places. Some of them trade with China. And many merchants have an income from land'.[74] Wealth of this kind broke through social barriers, and promoted further fusion between landed and merchant classes in Peru by means of marriage alliances, which was another way for descendants of rich merchants to ennoble themselves and for the aristocracy to revive its fortunes.

The ultimate source of merchant wealth, as of all wealth in Peru, was silver mining: this was the market merchants supplied and the industry they financed. But the Peruvian economy also had to provide for the sustenance of mining and its secondary industries. And it had to feed Lima, capital of Peru and of the mining industry, a city of 10,000 whites, 10,000 Negroes, and

[71] Manuel Belaunde Guinassi, *La encomienda en el Perú* (Lima, 1945), pp. 218–49; Marvin Goldwert, 'La lucha por la perpetuidad de encomiendas en el Perú virreinal, 1550–1600', *Revista Histórica* (Lima), xxii (1955–56), 336–60, xxiii (1957–58), 207–45; Guillermo Céspedes del Castillo, 'La sociedad colonial americana en los siglos XVI y XVII', in J. Vicens Vives, ed., *Historia social y económica de España y América*, iii, 388–578, especially pp. 518–24; the latter work is a fine synthesis of the economic and social history of Spanish America to 1700.

[72] Rodríguez Vicente, *El tribunal del consulado de Lima*, pp. 40–41, 51, 56, 69, 75–76.

[73] Richard Konetzke, 'La formación de la nobleza en Indias', *Estudios Americanos*, iii (1951), 329–57; Guillermo Lohmann Villena, *Los americanos en las órdenes nobiliarias*, 1529–1900 (2 vols., Madrid, 1947); on the entrepreneurial activities of the colonial aristocracy, see Hans Pohl, 'Zur Geschichte des adligen Unternehmers im spanischen Amerika (17./18. Jahrhundert)', *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, ii (1965), 218–44.

[74] *Descripción del Virreinato del Perú*, p. 59.

5,000 Indians.[75] North and south of Lima, in the valleys of coastal Peru, a Mediterranean-type economy was created as the region developed its centres of food production, commercial crops, and raw materials.[76] In the immediate vicinity of Lima some 200 well-irrigated *chacras* (farms or small estates) supplied the capital with wheat, maize and animal fodder. These were supplemented by supplies brought down the coast by sea. The region to the north of Lima—Guanbacho, Lasma and La Barranca—sent the products of the fertile valleys of Callejón de Huaylas, where many Lima residents had landed property, producing wheat, maize, wine, vegetables, fruits, poultry, goats, pigs, mules, tallow, hides, charcoal and firewood. The coastal plantations supplied cotton and sugar, products which at Chancay, where the Jesuits had property, were developed on a highly commercial basis. Everywhere along the coast labour was in great demand; there were complaints that *mita* Indians (*mita* being the Peruvian form of *repartimiento*) were diminishing, further evidence perhaps of an expanding agricultural economy. Further north the region of Trujillo also had its irrigated valleys, worked by Negroes and Indians, and rendered more productive by the use of guano as a fertiliser. Here wheat and maize were excellent investments, yielding returns of 500 per cent. and 200 per cent. respectively. Trujillo also produced cotton and sugar, wines and olives, as well as a variety of fruits; it had a number of flour, sugar and cotton mills; and it exported its products north to Panama and south to Lima.

To the south of the capital the outstanding product was wine, which became second in importance to silver—though well behind—as a motor of the Peruvian economy.[77] In the sixteenth century vines from Andalucía, notably from Málaga, were exported with official blessing to Peru, where they were cultivated by Negro slave labour in the valleys of Pisco, Ica and Nozca, producing high quality wines and a local variant known as *pisco*. Output was abundant and sold beyond the confines of Peru: it was exported to Chile, New Granada, Tierra Firme, Central America and Mexico, where it was traded against Mexican silk. Soon the days when the Tierra Firme fleet brought 150,000 casks of wine from Andalucía were a thing of the past. The metropolis became anxious. From about 1569 it was official policy to restrict the Peruvian wine industry, not merely because it competed with imports from the peninsula but also because it engendered economic independence.[78] In the 1590's Viceroy Cañete reported that Peru was peopled with Spaniards, born in the colony who had no attachments to the mother country;

[75] Helmer, 'Le Callao (1615–1618)', *op. cit.*, p. 151, n. 12; Rosenblat, *op. cit.*, i, 225, gives much higher figures for Lima's population in 1630, taking perhaps a wider district—25,000 whites, 30,000 Negroes, 5,000 Indians.

[76] Romero, *Historia ecónomica del Perú*, pp. 115–29.

[77] *Ibid.*, 124–27.

[78] Borah, *Early Colonial Trade and Navigation between Mexico and Peru*, p. 124.

that the colony was virtually self-sufficient in foodstuffs, including wine and sugar, and in coarser textiles; that the Philippine trade supplied it with silks and linens; all this to the ruin of Spanish trade and to the detriment of colonial dependence on the metropolis.

Agricultural development was associated with the formation of great estates, though not on the same scale as in Mexico. *Estancias de pan llevar* (wheatland), relying on native labour services and sometimes associated with *encomiendas*, made their appearance from the late sixteenth century. The origins of these medium-sized estates were varied: some were granted to settlers by *cabildos* from Inca government land; others were based on land bought or usurped from Indians fleeing *mita* service; and periodic government reviews of land titles, notably that of 1634, provided good opportunities for consolidating or extending land claims.[79] As the possibilities of agriculture became more appreciated—it sometimes yielded 500 per cent. and rarely less than 50 per cent. returns—and as commercialised products like sugar and wine assumed more importance, there was a tendency to accumulate land and to group *estancias* into great *haciendas*. These depended on much greater labour and water supplies; so *hacendados* had to be influential enough to acquire *mita* or *encomienda* Indians, wealthy enough to invest in slave labour, and powerful enough to usurp precious water resources. This tended to force out small proprietors or to reduce them to dependency on larger units.[80]

Products like wine and sugar, for which there was a wider market throughout Spanish South America, lent themselves to commercialised production. Not all Peruvian estate owners responded to this challenge. Among those who did were the Jesuits, and they set the pace of commercial farming in Peru. Jesuit estates were distributed between the coast and the *sierra*, and were managed according to strict specialisation, grain and livestock in the central *sierra*, sugar and wine on the coast. Property was accumulated from a number of sources—gifts of land from friends and devotees, purchases with funds donated to the Society, reinvestment of profits from existing enterprises, mortgage borrowings, and in some cases usurpation of marginal land.[81] The Jesuits tended to buy neglected *haciendas* and develop them, rounding off their boundaries, building sugar mills, investing in Negro slave labour, and making the whole into an efficient unit of production. Sugar

[79] Rowe, 'The Incas under Spanish Colonial Institutions', *op. cit.*, pp. 179–83; see also José María Ots Capdequí, *España en América. El régimen de tierras en la época colonial* (Mexico, 1959), and John Preston Moore, *The Cabildo in Peru under the Habsburgs* (Durham, N.C., 1954).

[80] Romero, *op. cit.*, pp. 112–14.

[81] Pablo Macera, *Instrucciones para el manejo de las haciendas jesuítas del Perú (ss. XVII–XVIII)* (*Nueva Corónica*, vol. ii, fasc. 2, Lima, 1966), pp. 16–23; this is a collection of instructions to managers of Jesuit estates, preceded by a striking editorial introduction.

plantations comprised about 50 per cent. of Jesuit holdings, and these were the nucleus of the colony's export industry in sugar. Production was concentrated in coastal Peru, principally in the valleys of Santa and Rímac.[82] It was a demanding enterprise and depended on several concurrent factors. It needed abundant water supply for irrigation and for driving the *ingenios* (water-driven mills). It required extensive land, for the plantations were worked on a rotation system to avoid soil exhaustion; land was also needed to service sugar production, particularly for the provision of *alfalfa*, the fodder for the oxen that ploughed the fields and drove the *trapiches* (animal-driven mills), and for transport animals. Sugar also demanded heavy capital investment, in mechanical installations, and above all in slaves, the latter representing 25–40 per cent. of total capital outlay. The high cost of slave labour meant that it was reserved almost exclusively for the commercialised plantations of coastal Peru. General agriculture, livestock and grain, which the Jesuits practised in their *sierra* estates, employed servile Indian labour and frequently developed debt peonage.

The greatest markets for the produce of the plantations, for sugar, wine and cotton, were the mining settlements of Upper Peru. In one way or another the whole of Peru worked for Potosí and profited from its wealth. To supply the mining settlements, the colony created an agricultural economy which developed parallel to the mines. If its returns were less spectacular than those from mining, it was more stable and more durable. A kind of agricultural capitalism emerged, modest enough in its proportions but sufficient to engender a prosperity of its own. Peru never became so self-sufficient in manufactures as it did in agriculture. It had its European craftsmen, of course, but their operations were on a small scale; and Indian manufactures did not appeal to Europeans.[83] Nevertheless, numerous workshops, the notorious *obrajes*, employing forced *mita* labour and owned by the state or by individual Spaniards, produced for the lower-class market or for particular needs. *Obraje* operations underwent some expansion in the seventeenth century, at the expense of the sweated labour employed there, and maintained a fairly high level of output in woollen and cotton cloth, cordage, sandals, leather goods, and gunpowder.[84] For the rest Peru did not necessarily rely on imports from Spain: she had surplus capital and a merchant

[82] *Ibid.*, pp. 32–49.

[83] There was, however, a distinct Peruvian class of craftsmen and artisans in the colonial period, including Indians, mestizos and Negroes; these have been well documented by Emilio Harth-Terré, *Artífices en el virreinato del Perú* (Lima, 1945), *El indígena peruano en las bellas artes virreinales* (Cuzco, 1960), and, with Alberto Harth-Terré, *Márquez Abanto. Perspectiva social y económica del artesano virreinal en Lima* (Lima, 1963).

[84] Romero, *op. cit.*, pp. 131–47; Rowe, 'The Incas under Spanish Colonial Institutions', *op. cit.*, pp. 177–79; F. Silva Santisteban, *Los obrajes en el virreinato del Perú* (Lima 1964).

marine, and she could satisfy many of her consumer needs within America, particularly from Mexico, and from the Far East.[85]

The Peruvian merchant marine consisted of 52 vessels plying the longer distances to Panama, Mexico and Chile, and 23 working the local coastal trade.[86] Their owners were Lima merchants, Jesuits, Potosí miners, and in some cases the Spanish, Genoese and Portuguese captains. These 75 vessels were in active operation; at least one vessel left or entered Callao every day, linking some twenty ports along the Pacific coast. They carried copper, tallow and hides from Valparaiso, wine from Pisco, grain and sugar from Trujillo, tropical woods, cotton and cacao from Guayaquil.[87] At Arica they unloaded supplies and merchandise for Potosí and collected its silver exports; at Panama they linked up with transatlantic traffic. The whole of this trade, local and transatlantic, was controlled by the merchants of Lima, who supplied the *avio* (advances) to cover mining overheads in Potosí and there sold most of their merchandise. And it reflected the increasing development of Peru: coastal and intercolonial trade was much more buoyant than the traffic to Panama, a sign of the colony's gradual disengagement from transatlantic trade. The Peruvian economy was self-sufficient; it expanded independently of the Spanish economy in the seventeenth century, and it was able to survive without the massive production of silver demanded by Spain. It possessed its own motors of trade, of which silver was only one; and even in the mining sector, Peru was beginning to keep more of the product for itself.

Potosí was a Spanish not an Inca creation. Situated high in the Andes, its extraordinary elevation made mining at once possible and tragic, possible because it obviated the difficulties of flooding and draining, one of the greatest problems in New World mining, tragic because the effort of labour in an atmosphere rare in oxygen—the *cerro* of Potosí rose to a height of 16,000 feet above sea level—was too great even for the plateau Indians, who were forced to work at altitudes beyond their physical capacity. On the foundations of its dearly extracted silver Potosí became the greatest city in America and in the whole Spanish world, with a population which grew from 120,000 in 1580 to 160,000 in 1650.[88] In the eyes of moralists Potosí was a monstrous Babylon of the New World, catering for large-scale vice as well as for Europe's bullion demand. And many of its people were indeed parasites, living on credit and on their wits: as one observer wrote to Philip II in 1595, 'there are 3,000 Europeans, including Spaniards, Portuguese and other

[85] See below, pp. 244–7.

[86] Helmer, 'Le Callao (1615–1618)', *op. cit.*, pp. 160–62.

[87] *Ibid.*, pp. 171–72.

[88] Lewis Hanke, *The Imperial City of Potosí. An unwritten chapter in the history of Spanish America* (The Hague, 1956), pp. 1, 3; on Potosí see also the monumental chronicle by Bartolomé Arzáns de Orsúa y Vela, *Historia de la Villa Imperial de Potosí*. Ed. Lewis Hanke and Gunnar Mendoza (3 vols., Providence, Rhode Island, 1965), with important introductory studies by the editors.

nationalities, 2,000 of them idle delinquents, who have no other occupation than gambling, drinking, fornication, robbery and assassination'.[89] Here, as in Mexico, the greatest profits from mining went not so much to actual mineowners as to those who could finance labour and operational costs, and these were mainly the capitalists of Lima.

Unlike Mexico, where the *real de minas* was a closely knit complex of mines, farms and ranches, the Peruvian mining settlements, owing to their high elevation, cold climate and arid soil, lacked the natural basis for the growth of satellite supply bases in the immediate vicinity. Food and supplies had to be brought in from outside, often over great distances. The *mita* Indians brought their own staples, *chuño* (dried frozen potatoes) and coca. For the rest, food supplies and mine timbers had to be transported from the distant Yungas valleys, especially Cochabamba, or from agricultural areas on the western slopes of the Andes such as Arequipa. Mules for work in the mines were driven from north-western Río de la Plata; Tucumán and Santa Cruz de la Sierra also sent wheat, fruits and cotton; from the distant pampas came hides and tallow, which were also supplied by Chile and northern Peru. For the import of Peruvian, American and European products, including vital mercury supplies, Potosí relied on the port of Arica, 400 miles away, and on the transport controlled by Arica—2,000 mules and 12,000 llamas, on whose backs were carried the incoming mercury and merchandise and the outgoing silver; and Arica developed in its vicinity a thriving agricultural sector providing fodder for the pack animals.

Potosí's silver production reached its peak towards the end of the sixteenth century. Registered exports to Spain quadrupled from 4·6 million pesos in 1571–75 to 19·1 million in 1581–85, and in 1591–95 they reached 23·9 million. After the 1590's production levelled off, though the level was fairly high, until about 1650. Silver production in Potosí dropped from a peak of 4,753,179 pesos in 1600 to 2,952,562 in 1650, and to 1,319,420 by 1700.[90] In the second half of the century, therefore, output dropped considerably, but the general trend was one of gradual recession rather than absolute collapse. Mining recession in Peru occurred later, caused fewer failures and remained much less severe than in Mexico. The factors affecting production

[89] Quoted by Marie Helmer, 'Luchas entre vazcongados y "vicuñas" en Potosí', *Revista de Indias*, xx (1960), 185–95, an expert analysis of social conflicts in Potosí through review of Alberto Crespo Rodas, *La guerra entre vicuñas y vascongados, Potosí, 1622–1625* (Lima, 1956), and Gunnar Mendoza L., *Guerra civil entre vascongados y otras naciones de Potosí. Documentos del Archivo Nacional de Bolivia, 1622–1641* (Potosí, 1954). See also Gwendolin B. Cobb, 'Supply and Transportation for the Potosi Mines, 1545–1640', *H.A.H.R.*, xxix (1949), 25–45.

[90] P. J. Bakewell, 'Registered Silver Production in the Potosí District, 1550–1735', *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, 12 (1975), 67–103. See also the same author's *Antonio López de Quiroga (industrial minero del Potosí colonial)* (Potosí, 1973).

were similar in both colonies, but less oppresive in Peru. First, operational problems were mounting. Exhaustion of accessible deposits led to deeper mining, presenting greater technical problems which the industry was not equipped to solve; from the deeper galleries came a type of ore which needed more sophisticated treatment to make it yield all its silver, and this was beyond the geological competence of the Peruvian miners. In conditions of technical stagnation output could only be maintained by extension of the mining area; discovery of rich deposits at Oruro in 1608 compensated for Potosí's performance, until the new mines too were overtaken by similar problems. Deeper mining, therefore, meant rising costs for fewer returns. To this was added the problem of labour supply.

Until the 1570's Peruvian mines were worked by labour which was more or less free. Indians of Chucuito were sent by their chiefs to Potosí to earn enough silver to pay the tribute of the community. In 1574, however, Viceroy Francisco de Toledo instituted the *mita*, whereby Indian quotas were forcibly sent each year to labour in the mines. Potosí was thus guaranteed the considerable advantage of cheap labour.

Potosí's mineworkers were forcibly recruited from 119 Indian villages in the highland area between Cuzco and Tarija. This, the notorious *mita de Potosí*, provided some 4,500 labourers who worked for four months at a time, or some 13,500 a year, out of a reserve of 86,000.[91] This was a crushing burden on the designated area. Admittedly it affected only a limited part of the total Indian population, and it required from a given individual only four months' mine work once in seven years. But it was an appalling experience while it lasted, ravaging bodies already weakened from malnutrition. After toiling underground—where they were sometimes kept continuously from Monday to Saturday—in an atmosphere rare in oxygen, rich in carbonic gas, hot and humid, the Indians staggered sweating into outside temperatures below freezing point. Mine work in Potosí played its part in depopulating the recruiting area; and its reputation did the rest, causing a flight of *mitayo* Indians beyond reach of the law. Some who remained found the means to buy themselves out; this they could do by paying the employer to whom they were assigned the equivalent of the wage of a free worker. In a period of rising costs and diminishing returns many owners preferred to leave their mines unworked and to live on the income from their *indios de faltriquera* as

[91] Alberto Crespo Rodas, *La 'mita' de Potosí* (Potosí, 1959); Jorge Basadre, 'El régimen de la mita', *Letras*. Universidad Mayor de San Marcos, tercer trimestre, no. 8 (1937), 325–64; Rowe, 'The Incas under Spanish Colonial Institutions', *op. cit.*, pp. 170–79.

they were called.[92] This accounts for the determination of mineowners to retain their quota of *mitayos*, which in turn prevented the distribution of labour according to the needs and performance of actual mines.

Finally, mining output was affected by mercury supply. The great expansion of silver production at the end of the sixteenth century was made possible by the adoption of the *patio*, or amalgamation, process at Potosí about 1580, an innovation which was itself stimulated by the successful performance of Peru's own mercury mine at Huancavelica.[93] Between 1559 and 1660 Huancavelica produced 21·8 million tons of mercury, compared to 15·1 million tons imported into America from Europe (principally from Almadén).[94] Only in its crisis years of 1606–10, 1621–25, 1626–30, 1631–35, did Huancavelica's output fail to surpass European imports, and even on these occasions it was not far behind. But the silver mines of Upper Peru needed at least 6,000 quintals of mercury a year, 5,000 for Potosí, the remainder for small mines. And from about 1595 production at Huancavelica began to fluctuate. Some of its problems were peculiar to mercury mining: the miners were small operators who depended on prompt payment for their product; purchase and sale of mercury was a state monopoly, and the state was sometimes years in arrears in its payments, which forced miners to cut back on production. Otherwise the industry's problems simply mirrored those of silver mining—mounting technical difficulties, rising costs, and, inevitably, the erosion of labour supply by mortality, absenteeism, and competition from other sectors. Work at Huancavelica had special hazards, notably mercurial poisoning, and a *mita* Indian was lucky to be alive after a stint in its subterranean galleries.[95] Brutal exploitation of Indian workers occasionally drew the attention of officials, churchmen and humanitarians. Although their interventions were transitory and, on the whole, unsuccessful, they sometimes affected short-term production, as they did in 1591–1610, when, largely as a result of Viceroy Velasco's reforms, output dropped by 50 per cent.[96] In the second decade of the seventeenth century production revived; and although it dropped again in 1626–30, it subsequently maintained itself; with the

[92] About 1660 miners' income from *indios de faltriquera* was estimated at 600,000 pesos a year, compared with royal *quinto*'s 400,000; see Rubén Vargas Ugarte, *Historia del Perú. Virreinato, siglo XVII* (Buenos Aires, 1954), pp. 305–6. On labour problems at Potosí see Guillermo Lohmann Villena, *El Conde de Lemos, virrey del Perú* (Madrid, 1946), pp. 245–77.

[93] Guillermo Lohmann Villena, *Las minas de Huancavelica en los siglos XVI y XVII* (Seville, 1949).

[94] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, p. 118.

[95] Whereas 1,300 *mita* Indians were employed at the face at Huancavelica in 1596, there were scarcely 620 a century later, indicating considerable depopulation; see Bargalló, *op. cit.*, p. 257, and Arthur P. Whitaker, *The Huancavelica Mercury Mine. A Contribution to the History of the Bourbon Renaissance in the Spanish Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 1941), p. 15.

[96] Lohmann Villena, *Las minas de Huancavelica*, pp. 180, 207.

exception of the years 1651–60; however, it never repeated the peak of the late sixteenth century, and after the 1650's it further diminished.

Potosí survived its crisis of technology, labour, and mercury much better than did the mining industry in Mexico. But it never repeated its massive performance of the late sixteenth century. Silver registered at Potosí dropped from 4·4 million pesos in 1602 to 3·5 million in 1608; between then and 1624 it did not drop below 3 million, nor below 2·8 million in the period 1625–40.[97] The yield from the royal *quinto* fell from 850,000 pesos in 1616 to 650,000 in 1619.[98] In default of better technology the only hope of recovery lay in new strikes; in 1636 the working of new veins at Potosí enabled output to revive and pushed up the *quinto* from 600,000 pesos in 1635 to 870,000 in 1636. By 1640, however, it was back to 600,000, and dropped to 500,000 in 1650.[99] Potosí's downward trend was subsequently countered by new strikes at Chocaya and Caylloma, but these, like Oruro, soon exhausted their richest and most accessible ores.

The mining districts, chiefly Potosí, provided up to 80 per cent. of the revenue of the central treasury in Lima; and out of this revenue a surplus had to be sent to Spain.[100] The surplus was inexorably reduced by falling output at Potosí, local defence expenditure, administrative costs, and fraud. According to Viceroy Esquilache (1615–21), the royal treasury income in Peru, from all sources, was theoretically 3,200,000 pesos a year; of this, 1,500,000 was spent in Peru on administration, purchase and shipment of mercury, and defence; the rest was sent to Spain.[101] Between 1600 and 1621, however, there was a fairly continuous downward trend in public remittances to Spain, from 2·4 million pesos to 686,195. In the period 1622–39 the trend was halted, and there was an irregular rise from 1·1 million in 1622 to 2·4 million in 1639, the result of unprecedented fiscal pressure. The period 1640–50 was one of fluctuation, the highest points being 2·6 million pesos in 1641 and 2·7 million in 1650, the lowest 1·7 million in 1645 and 956,000 in 1648.[102] In general Spain's loss was Peru's gain. An increasing proportion of silver

[97] These figures are taken from an estimate by a treasury official in Potosí, reproduced in Haring, *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies in the time of the Hapsburgs*, Appendix VI, pp. 333–35; they are not, of course, a measurement of actual production, for they do not account for fraud; unregistered and unquinted silver may have amounted to 70,000 or 80,000 pesos a year; see reference in note 98, and see above, p. 239, for best modern estimate.

[98] Carmen Bancora Cañero, 'Las remesas de metales preciosos desde el Callao a España en la primera mitad del siglo XVII', *Revista de Indias*, xix (1959), 35–88, especially pp. 44–53; for different figures see Helmer, 'Le Callao (1615–1618)', *op. cit.*, p. 179.

[99] Bancora Cañero, 'Las remesas de metales preciosos', *op. cit.*, pp. 56–57.

[100] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, pp. 1129–35, 1168–69.

[101] 'Relación del virrey Esquilache', in Ricardo Beltrán y Rozpide and Angel de Altolaguirre, eds., *Colección de las memorias y relaciones que escribieron los virreyes del Perú* (2 vols., Madrid, 1921–30), i, 275.

[102] Bancora Cañero, 'Las remesas de metales preciosos', *op. cit.*, pp. 85–86.

in Peru, as in Mexico, was absorbed by the viceroyalty in its own administrative and defence costs, and therefore indirectly in its own economy. While public remittances to Spain between 1621 and 1650 slowly decreased, the contributions of the Lima treasury to the needs of Chile and Peru, to coastal defence and naval construction, increased and multiplied. By 1650 defence costs alone absorbed about 20 per cent. of total viceregal revenue.[103]

The shift of economic activity was further reflected in the performance of the *almojarifazgo* and *alcabala* taxes. Jointly these represented only 5 per cent. of total viceregal revenue, but their relative yield was an index of economic change. Roughly speaking the *almojarifazgo* represented imperial trade, the *alcabala* local trade; and of the two it was the latter which grew more regularly and more significantly.[104] The fall in the *almojarifazgo* from 1630 and still more from 1640 denoted a fall in commerce with Spain; the growth of the *alcabala* meant that local trade was buoyant, that Peruvian money was being spent in Peru, that the colonial economy was increasingly independent.

These trends were accentuated in the second half of the seventeenth century. Up to 1650 the crown fought to maintain its income from Peru by exploiting every device in the tax-gatherer's repertoire. Now it had to give up the struggle. The total income of the Lima treasury from all sources dropped from 5·9 million pesos in 1651 to an annual average of 1·5 million in 1664–66. It then rose to 3·1 million in 1678, dropped again to 2·4 million in 1685, and reached an annual average of 3 million in 1686–90.[105] These fluctuations were due, as in the first half of the century, to the irregular performance of mining and of transatlantic commerce.

Mining output continued to suffer from exhaustion of accessible deposits, and from the technical difficulties and prohibitive costs of going deeper. The sufferings of the *mitayo* Indians were incalculable; and labour shortage was not arrested until 1690 when the *mita* quota was doubled by extending it to new provinces. Mercury supply was still limited by crude production techniques and by the state's failure to pay for the product—by 1661 it owed miners 400,000 pesos. The discovery of new veins led to some improvement in the 1670's, but by the end of the century Huancavelica was stagnant again with output showing a tendency to drop.[106] Transatlantic trade was now in full depression and yielded little in taxes. In the 1650's the Callao fleets sailed to Panama every year. From 1663 they maintained regularity, but only every

[103] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, pp. 1129–35, 1168–69.

[104] For figures see *ibid.*, viii, 1, pp. 1133–35, 1140–69.

[105] María E. Rodríguez Vicente, 'Los caudales remitidos desde el Perú a España por cuenta de la Real Hacienda. Serie estadísticas (1651–1739)', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, xxi (1964), 1–24, a valuable contribution.

[106] Lohmann Villena, *Las minas de Huancavelica*, pp. 354–60.

three years and sometimes four. From about 1682 the intervals became longer, until sailings were exceptional—in 1685, 1690 and 1696.

Remittances to Spain, however, were conditioned not only by Peruvian revenue but also by Peruvian expenditure. While public returns to Spain were going down, expenditure on defence and *situados* was going steeply up. This included defence of the *mar del Sur*, naval construction, and fortifications at the Straits of Magellan, Valdivia, Lima, Callao, and above all at Panama, which was the focal point of corsair activity in the last decades of the seventeenth century. The *situado* for Panama was increased from 105,000 pesos in 1670 to 406,000 in 1690.[107] Defence expenditure in the 1680's was enormous; it reached a peak of 6·5 million pesos in 1686–90, when only 749,277 pesos were remitted to Spain. Between 1651 and 1739 the income of the Lima treasury totalled 178·9 million pesos. Of this sum 55·2 million, or 30 per cent., was invested in defence of the viceroyalty and its dependencies; a further 49·4 per cent. was expended on viceregal administration, salaries, pensions, grants, and above all purchase of mercury; and only 20·6 per cent. (36·9 million pesos) was remitted to Spain. The bulk of Peruvian public revenue, therefore, was spent in Peru. The colony had become in some degree its own metropolis.

4. Inter-American Trade

The shift of the Spanish American economy and its mounting independence of Spain, the decrease of remittances to the metropolis and the growth of investment in the colonies themselves, all gave rise to a flourishing trade between the various parts of Spanish America, which further stimulated independent growth. The main routes of inter-American trade and navigation were between Mexico and Peru, and between Mexico and Venezuela.

By the beginning of the seventeenth century the Peruvian economy had begun to turn away from Spain towards Mexico. Transatlantic trade was too rare and too expensive to meet the demands of the growing colony. The Peruvian cycle of production and export, depending as it did on the seasonal activity of the mining industry, was difficult to synchronise with the arrival of the annual fleet at Portobello. The Spaniards too found it impossible to maintain the official timetable; transatlantic navigation became increasingly irregular, and between 1600 and 1650 Tierra Firme received only 29 fleets.[108] To the inconvenience of transatlantic trade was added the insecurity of the

[107] Céspedes, 'La defensa militar del istmo de Panamá a fines del siglo XVII y comienzos del XVIII', *op. cit.*, pp. 263–64.

[108] Manuel Moreyra y Paz-Soldán, *Estudios sobre el tráfico marítimo en la época colonial* (Lima, 1944), pp. 67–87.

capital invested in it. Sequestration of private silver remittances to Seville simply encouraged Lima merchants to divert their capital to inter-colonial trade, which was in any case less heavily taxed; it was also less subject to enemy attack and therefore less burdened with defence costs.[109] For all these reasons merchants' shipments from Peru to Spain moved from 14 million pesos in the two-year consignment of 1626 to 3,680,000 in 1635, to 5 million in 1645, to 4·3 million in 1650.[110]

Trade between Mexico and Peru began in the sixteenth century, and consisted in the movement of manufactured and luxury goods from Mexico, whose economy was more developed, and the return of silver from Peru, where mining was more productive and prices higher. Peru thus imported textiles, clothing, furniture, jewelry, toilet and household goods, leather goods and books from Mexico, and paid for them in silver, later also in wine and in some years mercury.[111] By the end of the sixteenth century the trade was buoyant and never short of finance. The drift of capital from Spanish to colonial trade was reported by the viceroy of Peru in 1592; he attributed it to the shortage and delays of shipments from Spain, the slow returns on capital, taxation and sequestration; whereas trade in Peruvian products and the import of goods from Mexico enjoyed a quick turnover and steady prosperity in safer conditions.[112]

From the 1570's the trade received a new injection—Chinese goods, procured in the Philippines, shipped across the Pacific in the Manila galleons, and sold for silver in Mexico.[113] Chinese damasks, satins, silks, chinaware, porcelain, perfumes and jewelry began to pour into Acapulco and found a ready market. For the Philippine trade offered a supply of luxury goods, and even vital necessities such as spices, iron and copper, at prices far below imports from Spain or even the cheaper—and cruder—products of the Mexican *obrajes*. In the 1590's Chinese textiles sold for perhaps one-ninth of the price of Spanish cloth in Peru. The opening of the Manila–Acapulco trade coincided with the steep rise of Potosí's silver output, which immediately acted as a magnet. Peruvian merchants were forbidden direct access to the Orient. With their greater silver resources, however, they could outbid the Mexicans for Chinese imports in the Acapulco market, and these they re-exported to Peru in enormous and increasing volume. By the 1590's the value of the Mexico–Peru trade, including re-exports of Chinese goods, amounted perhaps to 2 or even 3 million pesos a year.[114] It had grown even

[109] Borah, *Early Colonial Trade and Navigation between Mexico and Peru*, p. 125.

[110] Rodríguez Vicente, *El tribunal del consulado de Lima*, pp. 227–28.

[111] Borah, *Early Colonial Trade and Navigation between Mexico and Peru*, pp. 80–95.

[112] *Ibid.*, pp. 95, 121.

[113] William Schurz, *The Manila Galleon* (New York, 1939).

[114] Borah, *Early Colonial Trade and Navigation between Mexico and Peru*, pp. 116–24.

larger by 1602 when the *cabildo* of Mexico City claimed that 5 million pesos a year went from Acapulco to the Philippines and thence to the Chinese. Most of this money came from Peru, which took the greater part of the cargoes and supplied perhaps some 3 millions of the returns. By this time Mexico was merely an entrepôt for the re-export of Oriental goods to Peru, and Mexican manufactures—many of which Peru could now produce for itself—amounted to no more than about one-tenth in value of the trade. Indeed one Mexican activity, silk raising and manufacture, was a victim of Chinese competition, which, combined with Indian labour shortage and crown policy, helped to ruin the industry.[115]

The very prosperity of the new trade brought retribution. The imperial government was conscious of Peru's economic independence and alarmed at the escape of silver to the Far East. Spanish monopolists resented the competition and the shrinking market. Peninsular interests therefore combined to curtail the Philippine trade and to stop re-export to Peru.[116] Their reaction was part of the desperate attempt of Spanish merchants, in a period of contracting trade, to preserve Peru, the most valuable market, for themselves. Simultaneously they were also attempting to close another gap in the monopoly's defences, Buenos Aires and the pampa route to Peru.[117] In 1593 shipment of Chinese goods to all colonies other than Mexico was forbidden. Trade between Mexico and the Philippines was restricted to two ships; Chinese goods from Manila could be imported to the value of 250,000 pesos a year, and returns in silver to Manila up to 500,000 pesos. This legislation simply diverted the Mexico–Peru trade to contraband channels. These flowed so freely that the crown tried to impose further restrictions. In 1604 it reduced the size of the two Manila galleons from 300 to 200 tons; trade between Mexico and Peru was limited to three ships of 300 tons each a year; these might carry products of Mexico and Peru for exchange, but no specie, and they were restricted to the ports of Acapulco and Callao. In spite of heavier penalties, the contraband trade continued to flourish.[118] Further decrees reduced navigation between Mexico and Peru to two vessels a year, then to one a year, and in 1620 the export of Peruvian wine to Mexico was forbidden. Finally, the logical conclusion of this policy was reached in 1631 when, under pressure of the *consulado* of Seville, the crown forbad all trade and navigation between Mexico and Peru, a prohibition which was renewed in 1634 and endured for the rest of the century and beyond.

These prohibitions were not taken seriously. Peruvian ecclesiastics argued that they were unjust and not binding in conscience; and local officials could

[115] Borah, *Silk Raising in Colonial Mexico*, pp. 85–101.
[116] Borah, *Early Colonial Trade and Navigation between Mexico and Peru*, pp. 124–27.
[117] See above, pp. 194–5. [118] Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique*, viii, 1, p. 759.

not resist the pressure, or the temptation, to turn a blind eye.[119] In any case there were too many contraband outlets to permit strict control. One loophole was Peru's legal trade with Nicaragua, a source of vital supplies of pitch; this provided cover under which Chinese goods, transported from Mexico to Realejo and Sonsonate, could be loaded on Peruvian vessels. Another method was to divert to Acapulco silver consignments nominally registered to Guatemala and Nicaragua; returning shipments could be landed at Paita or other minor ports north of Callao. And there was always the well-tried device of rendezvous and transfer of silver off the Peruvian coast. Guayaquil was a favourite base of contraband, for it possessed weaker customs machinery than Callao; and vessels from Central America coming to its shipyards for repair did not normally arrive empty. The source of contraband, the Philippine trade itself, outgrew its legal confines; the value of shipments varied between 200,000 and 1·5 million pesos at Manila, worth two or three times that amount in Mexico and Peru; and contraband trade sometimes raised the final value to more than 10 million pesos.

The other great route of inter-colonial trade was that linking Venezuela and Mexico. Venezuela's chief product and export commodity was cacao, and its principal market was Mexico, where returns were quick and secure. Chocolate was in wide and popular demand; it was a favourite creole beverage, and Venezuela's product had a reputation for quality.[120] In the course of the seventeenth century production in the province of Caracas expanded strongly, and by the 1690's there was an exportable surplus of some 13,000 fanegas a year.[121] Regular traffic between Venezuela and Mexico began in 1622 when one vessel shipped 60 fanegas of cacao; in Mexico it earned good prices, paid in silver, which enabled producers to invest further in cacao production. From then onwards the Mexican market became far more important to Venezuela than that of the metropolis, both in the regularity of traffic and its value. In the period 1620–50 Venezuela exported to Mexico 35,512 fanegas of cacao, to Spain only 289. In 1651–1700 the Mexican market consumed 322,264 fanegas of Venezuelan cacao, while Spain took only 71,306. Up to about 1670 Spain provided a modest market for Venezuelan hides and tobacco, but these were trifling in value compared to cacao. Venezuela lived on colonial trade and had decreasing contact with Seville. By 1630 Mexican purchases had risen to 112,560 reales, while Spain's purchases (all products) stood at 136,177. In 1640 Mexican purchases of cacao

[119] Rodríguez Vicente, *El tribunal del consulado de Lima*, pp. 244–52, 270.
[120] Eduardo Arcila Farías, *Economía colonial de Venezuela* (Mexico, 1946), pp. 87–98; see also Antonio Arellano Moreno, *Orígenes de la economía venezolana* (Mexico, 1947), and Federico Brito Figueroa, *La estructura económica de Venezuela colonial* (Caracas, 1963).
[121] Eduardo Arcila Farías, *Comercio entre Venezuela y México en los siglos XVII y XVIII* (Mexico, 1950), 51–61, 72–73.

amounted to 321,792 reales, and those of Spain (all products) dropped to 44,400. In 1660 Venezuelan exports to Mexico were valued at 572,720 reales, those to Spain only 61,650. Although after this date cacao exports to Spain increased, they increased even more to Mexico. In the period 1661–1700 Mexico imported 273,763 fanegas of Venezuelan cacao, a 200 per cent. increase over the previous forty years.[122] Between 1684 and 1720 Mexico was virtually the only market for Venezuela, for trade with Spain dwindled to a trickle, not only in cacao but also in hides and tobacco, which the Dutch were now carrying direct to Europe. In the last decade of the seventeenth century, while Mexico consumed 108,801 fanegas of Venezuelan cacao valued at about 17 million reales, Spanish purchases in all products hardly reached 2 million reales.[123]

The only competition for Venezuela could come from Guayaquil, whose cacao production expanded about the same time. But Venezuela won the struggle for dominance in the Mexican market, thanks in part to the support of Spain. It was the policy of the crown, within the limits of its actual power, so to regulate inter-colonial trade that there was an apportioning of activities and markets and no monoculture colony was left completely out. Just as it deterred sugar exports from Mexico, which had alternative activities, in order to protect the Caribbean islands, so it discouraged cacao exports from Guayaquil in order to favour Venezuela.[124] In so doing the crown furthered Venezuela's growth until it had little need of Spain. The colony then developed its modest economy independently of the metropolis, earning Mexican silver for reinvestment in its plantations and merchant marine, and generating enough public revenue to pay for its own administration and defence. Venezuela, like the larger colonies, helped to create a second Spanish empire, whose societies and economies had emancipated themselves from their primitive dependence on Spain.

[122] *Ibid.*, pp. 106, 134–35.
[123] *Ibid.*, p. 56.
[124] *Ibid.*, 195–216, 249–78.

CHAPTER IX

GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES II

1. Privilege and Power: The Rule of Aristocracy

Charles II was the last, the most degenerate, and the most pathetic victim of Habsburg inbreeding. When, on 17 September 1665, he succeeded his father, Philip IV, he was only four years old, a sickly child, retarded by rickets, and mentally subnormal. During the whole of his thirty-nine years he suffered chronic ill-health, serious psychological disturbances, and frequent attacks of acute melancholia; these he tried to exorcise by spiritual means, which earned him the name of *el Hechizado*, the bewitched. Living his life under the shadow of death, he was incapable of exercising government. He was also incapable of producing children, and his two marriages remained, if not unconsummated, at least unfruitful. Monarchy therefore now suffered from two mortal afflictions—a weak incumbent and a succession problem.[1]

Royal sovereignty was totally eclipsed by the only alternative power base, the aristocracy. Charles II was no more than a cipher, a shadow king. Government was first controlled by his mother, the queen regent, and then by a succession of favourites and ministers, the former destroyed, the latter created by the aristocracy. Orders and decrees were issued in the king's name, but they were seldom submitted to him for signature, and official documents of the reign usually bore only a facsimile of the royal hand. In the unhappy, neurotic person of Charles II Spanish monarchy was reduced to a mockery of its former grandeur. Into the vacuum moved the aristocracy, who now reached their greatest—and their final—fulfilment. The only challenge to them came from the church. While the aristocracy deposed royal favourites and promoted their own leaders, the church provided the royal confessors

[1] The traditional work on the reign of Charles II is by the Duque de Maura, *Vida y reinado de Carlos II* (2nd ed., 2 vols., Madrid, 1954). This year-by-year chronicle of the political events of the reign is almost unreadable, but it is based on a lifetime of study, and on original documentation described in the preface. The peculiar form in which the work is cast is due in part to the fact that the author's entire collection of books, transcripts and notes was destroyed in the Civil War. Two previous works on the reign are much inferior: Julian Juderías, *España en tiempo de Carlos II el Hechizado* (Madrid, 1912); Ludwig Pfandl, *Carlos II* (Madrid, 1947). All these have been superseded by Henry Kamen, *Spain in the Later Seventeenth Century, 1665–1700* (London, 1980).

who moved assiduously along the corridors of influence if not of power. Premier and priest, these were the two manipulators of power in the reign of Charles II. But if there was any conflict between the two estates it was an argument between allies, not between alternatives. They had much in common. They were the privileged sectors of society; between them they virtually monopolised land; and the hierarchy of the church was almost an aristocratic preserve.

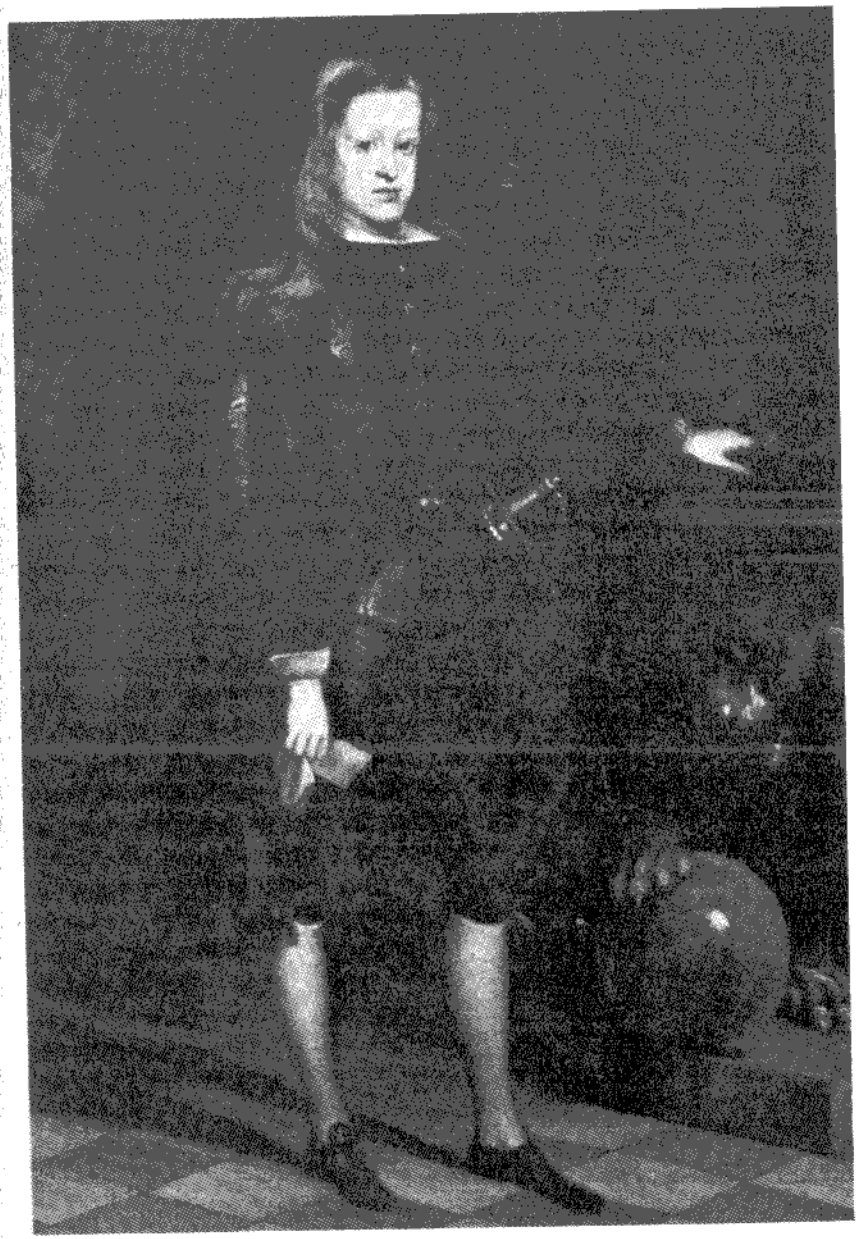
Against the general demographic trend of the seventeenth century, the ecclesiastical population seemed to be increasing. In the absence of exact statistics, estimates are largely guess-work; contemporary guesses varied between 100,000 for the 1620's and 180,000 for the 1660's.[2] Most of the *arbitristas* complained of the excessive number of clergy. According to Sancho de Moncada, 'a third of the Spanish population is made up of ecclesiastics, if we include religious and nuns, secular clergy, tertiaries, hermits, and people who have taken a vow of chastity'. While the ecclesiastical population grew in numbers, it did not grow in wisdom, knowledge, or even piety. No doubt there was much anonymous sanctity and charity in the Spanish church, but for many of its clergy it was simply a career. The higher clergy, sons of the aristocracy, shared the ideals and the background of their class. The mass of the lower clergy, the majority of humble origin, had little hope of preferment; but many of them had entered the priesthood in order to escape the winds of destitution outside the cloister, and in this at least they succeeded. The church drew its wealth essentially from its own land and from other people's labour, that is from rents and from tithes. The extent of landed property controlled by ecclesiastical institutions is difficult to determine; in the mid-eighteenth century it amounted perhaps to one-seventh in area of the two Castiles and León, and one-fourth in rent collected.[3] In addition to land owned directly in mortmain, the church also possessed *señorío eclesiástico*, which gave it seigneurial jurisdiction and revenue in the towns and lands under its lordship. Finally, as a last line of defence, the church possessed its own *fuero*; this endowed the clergy with substantial immunity from civil jurisdiction and enabled them to defend their interests—and their property—by reference to ecclesiastical law and in ecclesiastical courts.[4]

The omnipresence of the clergy, their economic security, and their extensive *fuero*, all engendered a certain anti-clericalism in the rest of society and provided material for conflict with the state. In the cortes of 1621 Mateo Lison, deputy for Málaga, denounced the 'disadvantages of so many religious

[2] Reglà, 'La época de los dos últimos Austrias', in J. Vicens Vives, ed., *Historia social y económica de España y América*, iii, 267. Domínguez Ortiz suggests 150,000 for the end of the century.

[3] A. Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVIII* (Madrid, 1955), p. 128.

[4] See Quintín Aldea, S. J., *Iglesia y Estado en la España del siglo XVII* (*Ideario político-eclesiástico*) (Comillas, 1961).



Charles II by J. Carreño de Miranda

foundations and chantries, and the excessive accumulation of landed property by the ecclesiastical estate'. In 1626 the cortes complained of ecclesiastics who 'by endowments, confraternities, chantries, or simple purchase, are gradually possessing themselves of the whole kingdom', and it requested the crown to halt the accumulation of property in mortmain, particularly as it was exempt from taxation. Criticism of this kind became even more common in the reign of Charles II. Reporting on the state of Valladolid, in 1683, at a time of great economic difficulty, a minister of the crown claimed that

> the most important part of the inhabitants consists of the ecclesiastical chapters and other clergy, infinite in number, from the University, College, Chancellery, and Inquisition, and from the 53 convents of religious that there are, besides 17 parishes and other oratories, all of which employ people solely for the service of their ministers. . . . It seems that this city is made up principally of consumers only.[5]

Valladolid of course was an exceptional centre of ecclesiastical activity; and it was easy to blame the church for problems which the administration could not solve. Nevertheless, the number of clergy in a country which notoriously lacked producers inevitably drew the attention of ministers seeking solutions to economic distress. In its concern the government of Charles II took an unprecedented step and in 1689 addressed a circular letter to all the bishops of Spain asking them temporarily to suspend ordinations to the priesthood:

> The number of those admitted to minor orders in recent years is so great that many places have hardly a batchelor left who is not a cleric. And many older men, now widowers, also enter orders. The object of most of them is to procure clerical immunity, to live with greater ease, to enjoy exemption from taxes, and other worldly motives.[6]

The church in fact was not completely exempt from taxation. Its services were indispensable for raising the *cruzada*, whose annual yield in the peninsula alone was 800,000 ducats in silver. And the church itself paid the *tercios reales*, a portion of its income from tithes; the *subsidio*, an annual tax on real property, yielding 420,000 ducats; and the *excusado*, a type of tithe, producing 250,000 ducats.[7] The papacy also conceded a number of special taxes on the Spanish clergy, the *décimas eclesiásticas*, assigned to defence needs from time to time and amounting to some hundreds of thousands of ducats.

[5] Quoted by Henry Kamen, 'The Decline of Castile: the last crisis', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., xvii (1964–65), 63–76, see especially p. 70.
[6] Quoted by Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 510.
[7] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 193–232.

Finally, the clergy were liable, much to their resentment, to the *millones*, though this too was subject to the periodic permission of the papacy, not always granted with enthusiasm. In 1656 there was a kind of clergy revolt led by Archbishop Pedro de Tapia of Seville and Bishop Juan de Palafox of Osma, aroused by constant demands for revenue and by government accusations that the clergy were not contributing to national needs. In the reign of Charles II the archbishop of Toledo utterly refused to allow his clergy to be taxed for the *millones*. By this time the church was even better positioned to defend itself, for the archbishop of Toledo and the royal confessors occupied important positions in the counsels of government.

Yet the church could not compete in privilege and power with the secular aristocracy, who now reached their political majority, if not maturity. The monarchy of Charles II was a kind of aristocratic republic, where the grandees assembled to make or break a government regardless of the royal will. Numerically the higher aristocracy expanded in this reign, as more and more nobles, some of them recently created, were promoted to the ranks of the *grandeza*. Whereas in 1627 there were only 41 grandees, in 1707 there were 113.[8] This movement upwards served to heighten the intolerance and exclusivism of the older aristocratic houses, but it also augmented the power and the wealth of the group as a whole. For the new grandees were wealthy men who openly bought their rank. Wealth, after all, was the ultimate test of *grandeza*. The grandees had the greatest fortunes in the kingdom, some of them 100,000 ducats a year, most of them not less than 40,000 to 80,000. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the income of grandees and *títulos* in the whole of Spain was computed at 5 million ducats, not counting the value of their property; at mid-century it was estimated at 7 million ducats, compared to 1·7 million received by 11 archbishops and 55 bishops. To some extent the landed aristocracy benefited from economic depression. The agricultural crises of the seventeenth century ruined many small farmers and favoured property concentration. The large Andalucian estates grew from an original unit by successive additions of small areas of land, often maintaining their identity in spite of changes of ownership. The owner was usually a noble, a prosperous merchant with noble pretensions, or an ecclesiastical institution.

The aristocracy possessed great wealth in terms of fixed assets, but were restricted in cashing in on these by entail. And the extravagant expenditure of many nobles far outstripped their capital resources. For them the rule of Charles II came as manna from heaven. The heavy financial demands of Philip IV and Olivares had wounded the pride and hurt the pockets of

[8] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 219–21.

numerous noble families and alienated them from the crown; further resentment was caused when older houses, struggling with creditors, saw upstart *hidalgos*, well placed in the higher ranks of the administration, getting rich and buying *senoríos* and titles. Political power could be employed in defence of property. In the reign of Charles II the crown was too weak to stand up to the nobility; they could divert taxation away from their class, refuse with impunity to give *donativos*, and increase their demands for *mercedes*. The request for a *donativo* in 1667 drew only paltry returns from some and a curt refusal from others; many nobles stated quite firmly that they had already given more than enough to Philip IV. In the last decades of the century the administration had to reconcile itself to requesting only limited *donativos* from the nobility. By then severe economic depression had affected even big estates. To a decree of 1680 conceding four months' delay to cattle owners for payment of the *hierbas* tax, the duke of Béjar replied that the rent from his pasture land was 'almost the only capital he has, so depopulated are his estates; he has lost a fortune in the Portuguese wars; he has to pay 30,000 ducats a year to run his house in Valladolid, and 6,000 for other establishments; he has lost 30,000 ducats through devaluation, and he owes 120,000 to his creditors'.[9] If this was the situation of one of the greatest magnates in Castile, the middle and lower ranks of the nobility were even worse off, for they could expect less by way of *mercedes*.

Lacking entrepreneurial instincts or experience, the nobility were incapable of remedying their fortunes by economic methods alone. In the second half of the seventeenth century the financial affairs of some of the greatest families of Castile were in chaos.[10] The estates of the Enríquez, the Admirals of Castile, were encumbered by vast debts and besieged by creditors; the dukes of Osuna, the house of Pastrana, the Constables of Castile, and many other members of the higher nobility were in similar difficulties. Nevertheless they continued to live up to their rank and to remain the largest spenders in the community. How did they do it? Partly by mortgaging their property. The crown was reluctant to allow this, regarding it as almost as bad as disentailing. But permission could be procured, especially under Charles II, and especially for pretexts such as dowries; this explains the immense dowries of the time—they were a means of freeing property and getting hands on liquid capital. By one means or another the nobility maintained their personal income. And one of the means was royal grants.

The aristocratic reaction which followed the fall of Olivares, combined with the indolence and generosity of Philip IV, opened the gates for a new

[9] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 231.

[10] See above, pp. 146–7, and Jago, 'The "Crisis of the Aristocracy" ', *op. cit.*, pp. 60–90.

outflow of pensions and grants. This became a deluge in the reign of Charles II. Access to *mercedes* was at once a motive and a consequence of aristocratic dominance. Indeed so accessible did public funds become, including colonial *encomiendas* and revenue, that the treasury virtually ran a welfare service for the aristocracy, and many nobles regarded an income from *mercedes* as a convenient alternative to working their estates. It was estimated that *mercedes* and other benefits consumed some 3 million ducats a year, an enormous burden for a treasury already tottering under its many obligations. The Council of Finance attempted to stem the flood, not out of principle but because it could not find the funds. It did not have much success. In some cases, perhaps, royal grants were justified because of services rendered. Embassies were financial tombstones for their incumbents; and they were only given to those who had personal fortunes, for cost-of-living allowances only covered part of the heavy outlay. But these were not the appointments most sought by the aristocracy. The richest prizes were the viceroyalties in Italy and the Indies. These were so profitable that even after living in extraordinary splendour and making princely gifts to the king, viceroys still had enough to restore their estates and build great mansions. Nobles like the marquis of Mancera brought back immense riches from the Indies. These viceroyalties were so valuable that the ministers of Charles II auctioned them off to the highest bidder. In 1695 the viceroyalties of Mexico and Peru were so disposed of; the former went to the count of Cañete for 250,000 escudos.[11]

Offices, court appointments and *mercedes* were all supplementary to the nobles' basic income which came from land, *señoríos*, and royal revenue alienated to them. This complex of property rights enabled the aristocracy to monopolise power at a local level, and gave Spanish provincial life an essentially feudal character. By virtue of *señorío* jurisdiction a lord had the right to name judges and local officials, receive seigneurial dues, and in some cases possess the revenue from *alcabalas*. This meant that in a large part of Spain the king was not sovereign. In the province of Salamanca, for example, only 30·5 per cent. of territory and 33·7 per cent. of population came under royal jurisdiction; 63 per cent. of territory and 60·4 per cent. of population lay within secular *señoríos*; and the rest belonged to *señorío eclesiástico*.[12] Other provinces of Old Castile presented similar features, the chief cities being in royal jurisdiction but all the major towns and villages in the hands of the aristocracy. By the eighteenth century 17 cities and one-third of the towns

[11] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, p. 249.

[12] See María Dolores Mateos, *Salamanca*, in Miguel Artola, ed., *La España del Antiguo Régimen* (Salamanca, 1966).

and villages of Spain belonged to secular *señoríos*. The proportion was highest in the two Castiles, Extremadura, western Andalucía and Valencia.[13]

This primitive feudalism seriously inhibited royal administration. For the territorial preponderance of the nobility was paralleled by their control of political and social life. The greatest cities of Castile—Toledo, Avila, Ciudad Real, Seville—were dominated by aristocratic families, who spread out a network of influence throughout the land. Vassals served them, corregidores deferred to them; and delinquents, if they were relatives or clients, could shelter under their protection. A chronicler of Jérez recounts that in 1664, after violent riots in the town, a special judge, Sebastian Infante, was sent to restore law and order; one of his first actions was to initiate proceedings against the corregidor, Rodrigo Dávila Ponce de León. At this point the duke of Arcos arrived one night in his coach outside the lodgings of the judge, and seeing the latter's clerk in the porch called out from his coach, 'Listen, where is don Sebastian?'. 'He is inside sir, I'll call him'. 'Just tell him that the corregidor of Jérez belongs to my family, that's all'. The clerk immediately informed the judge, who came rushing out, pulling on his clothes and running after the coach, but the duke, although he heard him calling, did not stop.[14]

The territorial power of the aristocracy in the *señorío* was complemented by their political power in the *municipio*. The Castilian nobility tended to live in towns rather than on their uncomfortable estates, the higher aristocracy in Madrid, the rest in the provinces. Excluded by the earlier Habsburgs from a political role at the centre, the majority of the nobles had made their base of influence in the towns. The sale of municipal offices enabled them to control the municipalities. In the course of the seventeenth century most towns came to be dominated by proprietory *regidores*; these were almost always nobles of the middle rank, the *caballeros*. In some of the principal towns of Castile—Valladolid, Avila, Toledo, Alcalá de Henares, Plasencia, Ciudad Real, Trujillo, Córdoba, Seville, Madrid itself—the nobility had a legal monopoly of municipal offices, which they often exercised through deputies or rented out for money. But the majority of Castilian towns practised the system of *mitad de oficios*, that is an equal distribution of offices between nobles and commoners, a system still favourable to the nobles as they were a minority. In this way local oligarchies of powerful men came into being, combining traditional nobles and newly-rich commoners. These rural oligarchies greatly profited from their position, administering public property to their own advantage, such as the official granary, the royal and municipal taxes and other local institutions. This urban alliance between

[13] Richard Herr, *The Eighteenth-Century Revolution in Spain* (Princeton, 1958), p. 95; G. Desdevises du Dezert, *L'Espagne de l'ancien régime* (3 vols., Paris, 1897–1904), i, 130.

[14] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, p. 221.

nobles and wealthy commoners tended to replace the primitive stratification of society based on estates by another based on wealth. In a sense it also strengthened the defences of the aristocracy.

What did commoners think of government by aristocracy? In Valencia, where seigneurial jurisdiction was particularly savage, anti-aristocratic feeling exploded into rebellion.[15] In Castile on the other hand there was virtually no challenge to the existing structure. The larger cities had long lost the right to elect their representatives; and provincial interests saw some advantage in having proprietory *regidores*, independent of the central government. In smaller towns the system of *mitad de oficios* was a compromise solution, though it did not entirely preclude conflict between nobles and commoners. The towns of northern Castile were so prolific in *hidalgos* that there could be no successful challenge from below. In the south the nobles were a small minority, but of greater substance, and urban opposition movements simply substituted one noble leader for another. But in the towns of central Castile there was a balance of estates and fierce competition for power, issuing sometimes in popular revolt on a small-town scale. Violence was ruthlessly suppressed; in the absence of a police force the nobility itself controlled the enforcement of order and dominated the local militia. Yet there is no evidence of basic anti-aristocratic sentiments in society at large or of any real threat to the social structure. The close and mutual alliance between crown and aristocracy presented a united front to the rest of society.

For most of the Habsburg period the relation between aristocracy and crown was based on a compromise: the nobles were left undisturbed in their provincial strongholds, while the king exercised undisputed sovereignty at the centre. Under a strong monarchy like Philip II the equilibrium was tipped towards the crown; under Charles II the equilibrium was destroyed. The grandees first made it clear that they would not tolerate ministers who came from outside their ranks; they then assessed the weakness of the queen mother and her son and decided they were amenable to force; and they finally ousted plebeian *validos* and replaced them by aristocrats. But these interventions were purely factious and destructive, and embodied no political programme. The nobles failed to co-operate with their own chief ministers or even to sustain them. As soon as they entered politics they exposed their ineptitude and parasitism. It is not surprising that under a new dynasty they were quickly demoted.

[15] See below, pp. 280–82.

2. The Last *Validos*

Spanish government needed a prime minister: this had now been recognised by kings and political theorists alike. Unfortunately the office emerged in association with the *valido*, the favourite, who monopolised the king's confidence and patronage as well as his political duties. It therefore attracted the prejudice of moralisers and the suspicion of the aristocracy, who regarded the *valido* as a barrier between themselves and the crown. In his last years Philip IV succumbed to these prejudices and ruled without a prime minister. And he so disposed in his will that there would be no place for a *valido* after his death. He appointed the queen mother, Mariana, regent and guardian of the heir to the throne, the young Charles, until he should reach the age of fourteen. She was authorised to deal with state papers and to remit them to the deliberations of a *Junta de Gobierno*, formed under the terms of Philip's will. This was to be composed of the president of the Council of Castile, the vice-chancellor of Aragon, the archbishop of Toledo, the inquisitor general, a councillor of state, and a grandee to be nominated. Thus although the queen mother was in a sense the chief executive she did not have sovereign power, for she had to act with the advice of the Junta, which was instructed to assemble daily.[16] The thinking behind Philip's will is clear enough. Mariana was an unstable, ignorant and obstinate woman, unfitted to rule a vast and complex empire. On her own she was ready made for recourse to a *valido*. The solution as Philip saw it was to assign power in advance not to a single person—admittedly there were few outstanding candidates for a premiership—but to an institution representing the higher bureaucracy, the church and the grandees. This was intended to take the place of a *valido* and prevent one emerging. But in the event the Junta was not incompatible with favouritism, for there was nothing to prevent it being subverted from within.

And subverted it was.[17] At first the queen worked exclusively with her official advisers. But she soon began to prefer more personal support. As she was weak of character and scrupulous of conscience she inevitably took counsel of her confessor, not only on faith and morals but also on matters of government. Her confessor was John Everard Nithard (or Neidhard), an Austrian Jesuit who had accompanied Mariana to Spain on her marriage to Philip IV. He was a good divine, pious and ascetic, but inexperienced in politics and unqualified for office. Mariana trusted him and now promoted

[16] Valiente, *Los validos en la monarquía española del siglo XVII*, p. 21.

[17] For a contemporary account of Spanish politics, 1665–75, see 'Relación histórica de la menor edad de Carlos II y estado de la monarquía durante este período', *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, lxvii, 3–68.

him. From the confessional he moved to the Council of State, the office of inquisitor general, membership of the Junta de Gobierno, and finally in effect prime minister. Like all previous *validos*, Nithard was first friend and confidant of his royal patron, then, with the latter's total support, head of government. Observers watched the process with incredulity. As an anonymous memorial said of the new favourite: 'From favour he passed to confidence, then to arrogance, and from all this to command of a universal empire'.[18]

Yet Nithard was unlike any previous *valido*. An essential difference lay in his personal qualifications. As these did not conform to the social structure of power in Spain they virtually ruled him out as a serious candidate for leadership. He was not a member of the Castilian aristocracy. He was moreover extremely unpopular, being regarded as an obscure Jesuit of modest origins, and a foreigner to boot. As if this were not enough there were two political impediments to his progress, the will of the dead king and the opposition of Don Juan José de Austria. The will of Philip IV was difficult to ignore, for it possessed a kind of 'constitutional' appeal. The queen did not dare to flout it openly. She sought instead to preserve the appearance of constitutionalism by preserving the Junta de Gobierno, and then included Nithard in it at the first opportunity. It was not enough to appoint him to the Council of State, for there he was simply one of its members, with no more status or voting power than the others. In the course of 1666, therefore, the queen procured Spanish naturalisation for Nithard; this she did by appeal to the votes of the cities represented in the cortes, though five of them, under the influence of a hostile aristocracy, abstained from voting. She then got the necessary papal permission for Nithard as a Jesuit to accept high ecclesiastical office, and on 22 September 1666 appointed him inquisitor general.[19] He was now *ex officio* member of the Junta de Gobierno, and it was at this point that the settlement of Philip IV was subverted. The Junta itself, representing different factional interests, was not homogeneous enough to resist the placing of a *valido* within its ranks. And opinion at court was divided: some wanted to reinforce the power of the Junta, others wanted to give power to Don John of Austria.

This dark, handsome prince, the illegitimate son of Philip IV and the actress María Calderón, was deeply sensitive of his second-class status in the royal family. Touchy and conceited, he seemed to attract the extremes of admiration and aversion. His father was frankly outraged by his blatant political ambition and in his last years refused to have him in his presence.

[18] Quoted by Valiente, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[19] Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 87–89.

Don John attributed the estrangement to the malice of his stepmother, and his distrust of Mariana gradually hardened into hatred. He enjoyed some popularity of a demagogic kind. He had fought in every theatre of Spain's recent wars—Naples, Catalonia, the Low Countries, and Portugal. Although his various commands had not been crowned with conspicuous success, he embodied what military virtues existed in Spain at the time; and his patriotic career, combined with a reputation as a womaniser, gave him some place in popular estimation. At all events he contrasted vividly with the sombre Nithard. The political vacuum left by Philip IV sharpened Don John's political ambitions. Now aged thirty-seven, he resented his exclusion from the Junta de Gobierno, and refused to be fobbed off with peripheral assignments. In his own eyes at least, he was no longer a mere general.

In 1667 Louis XIV launched the War of Devolution to enforce his spurious claim to the Spanish Netherlands. Amidst the political uncertainties of the time, war at least was a familiar landmark, and the Spanish government went through the well-tried motions of raising money and troops for dispatch northwards. Don John was appointed commander-in-chief and governor of the Netherlands. He had previous experience of a similar appointment; and now, as an inducement to leave Spain, he was given unprecedented powers—authority to make war and peace, to confer titles of nobility, to dispose of 1 million pesos in cash and 780,000 escudos in letters-of-credit. He was assigned a personal emolument of 600,000 escudos; reinforcements were ready and a naval squadron was waiting at La Coruña. Anxious for a confrontation with Nithard, Don John declared all this insufficient and raised his demands impossibly high, including the right to sell commercial privileges to the English and to enter into financial arrangements with the Dutch. When these terms were inevitably rejected, he claimed that the government had 'closed all roads for employing my life in the service of the crown'; and he declined the appointment.[20] The Junta recognised the latent threat to their own position, and so did the administration. With unwonted vigour they abandoned the traditional procedure of posting opponents to lucrative offices in the periphery, and instead went on the offensive. Don John was replaced as governor of the Netherlands by the Constable of Castile and was ordered to be confined at Consuegra in New Castile, where he was prior of the military order of San Juan. And a number of his partisans, such as the duke of Pastrana and the count of Castrillo, were removed from office.

Yet the unity of the Junta and the councils which advised it was more

[20] *Ibid.*, i, 111–12.

apparent than real. Don John had his supporters within their ranks, nobles who referred to him as 'the son of our lamented monarch' and who thought he embodied the qualities of monarchy, at a time when there was no Infante and the shadowy figure of the boy king inspired little confidence for the future. Meanwhile the rule of Nithard, if such it was, earned little credit from its handling of the war. The Triple Alliance of England, the United Provinces and Sweden brought Louis XIV to the peace table in 1668, but Spain, after heavy defeats in the Netherlands, had no cards to play. In return for recovering Franche-Comté she had to give up a number of strategic points in the Low Countries. At home, whatever his qualities of integrity and dedication, Nithard was totally lacking in credibility and the kind of prestige which counted in Spain; he was not a noble, he had no faction or political following, and his position depended solely on the support of the queen, whose own power was not sovereign. Mariana might regard Nithard as prime minister, but the administration refused to view him as anything other than a *valido* whose influence on the queen was secret and sinister. In 1668 the Council of Castile addressed a *consulta* to the queen requesting her to choose 'a person through whose hands would pass matters of government'. The 'person' tacitly proposed was undoubtedly Don John. But the Council was not unanimous: four councillors expressed a minority view arguing that Philip IV knew what he was doing in establishing the existing form of government and purposely avoided giving total power to one man. This of course was an argument against Nithard as well as against Don John. And on this occasion the queen leaned towards the minority report and sought to maintain more of an equilibrium between the Junta and the *valido*.

The lowest common denominator among government opinion was opposition to Nithard. Was this enough to win power for Don John? He thought it was. In October 1668 he resumed his conspiratorial activities with more determination. The Junta got wind of these and ordered his arrest. But the military were reluctant to co-operate and a leak from the Junta forewarned Don John. He was able to escape to Aragon and Catalonia, denouncing 'the tyranny and execrable evil of Father Nithard', and rallying some support in the eastern kingdoms. These events were evidence of a split in Junta solidarity and of support for Don John within its ranks. The Council of Castile refused to initiate legal proceedings against him, and by the end of 1668 the other councils were moving away from the queen and her *valido*. The tendency within the administration was not so much to back Don John as to wait and see. What they saw was threat of violence. In January 1669 Don John moved out of Aragon towards Madrid and refused to disband his forces until the queen dismissed Nithard. The menace was sufficient to persuade the Junta de Gobierno and the Council of Castile to advise compliance; and the

queen, reluctantly but with no alternative, dismissed the *valido* and sent him out of the country.[21]

The programme of Don John and his aristocratic faction, as expounded by an assiduous propaganda machine, was impeccably reformist—reorganisation of the treasury and fiscal relief; just distribution of *mercedes*; improvement of the army, 'the right arm of monarchy'; good administration of justice; careful education of the king; replacement of Nithard's creatures; and a promise that never again would the royal confessor have control of government.[22] This sounded more like a charter for the aristocracy than a new deal for the common people. In any case it remained no more than a promise. Having removed Nithard, the only point on which there was unanimity, Don John did not reach the premiership. He professed not to want it: 'I have never had civil ambition or thought of seizing power; indeed I would expect to be regarded the most unworthy of creatures the day I was seen to seek or procure it'.[23] In fact he could not get it. Political opinion was not yet ready for a military *golpe de estado*, nor did Don John know how to implement one. After a few months of uncertainty he seemed to lose his nerve and took the easy way out, accepting appointment as vicar-general of Aragon and Catalonia and taking up residence in the archiepiscopal palace in Zaragoza. As for his supporters they did not form a compact opposition capable of replacing the senior ministers and the conciliar personnel, so these continued to serve their constitutional superiors. From mid-1669 to 1673 the queen mother governed under the advice of the Junta de Gobierno and with its collaboration. The will of Philip IV appeared to have been vindicated.

Yet this system of government was still as vulnerable as before. The semi-coup of 1669 had shaken the queen mother but not changed her. Don John had failed to follow up his negative success. And the aristocracy, while they could agitate, had not yet grouped themselves into an opposition capable of controlling government developments. So by 1673 political observers had identified a successor to Nithard. The new *valido*, Fernando Valenzuela, proved at least that in seventeenth-century Spain success was open to a certain type of talent. Valenzuela was an adventurer. Born in 1636, the son of an obscure army officer, he began life in the service of the duke of Infantado. After an unsuccessful military career in Italy he returned to Madrid at the age of twenty-three, an elegant, uneducated young man, hanging around the fringes of the court, without office or prospects.[24] In 1661, through marriage to a maid of honour at the palace, he obtained an appointment as

[21] *Ibid.*, i, 139–50; Valiente, *op. cit.*, pp. 25–26, 61–62; Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, *Bosquejo histórico de la Casa de Austria* (Madrid, 1911), p. 337.

[22] Maura, *op cit.*, i, 153–54.

[23] Quoted *ibid.*, i, 151.

[24] On Valenzuela see *ibid.*, i, 185–90, 194–201, 225–42, 244–52, 257–61.

equerry to the queen, and acted unofficially as a kind of factotum in the night life of Philip IV. He survived in the new court in the service of the queen and Nithard, and was rewarded with the *hábito* of Santiago in 1671. Rumours began to circulate, chiefly from the pen of the archbishop of Toledo, that Valenzuela's relations with the queen were sexual; this was certainly untrue and, in Mariana's case, out of character. What she needed was a government adviser to lean on. She was an ignorant and bewildered woman, unable to cope alone or to confront an institution like the Junta de Gobierno without personal support; so she relied on Valenzuela for information about people and affairs and for reassuring advice. In 1673 he was appointed chief equerry and superintendent of works at the palace; this gave him unrestricted access to the royal household. In 1674 he was promoted to the Council of Italy, though this was an income rather than an office. In fact Valenzuela, unlike Nithard, received no major political appointment at this stage. He was simply the closest confidant of the queen; while this made him influential, it did not enable him to handle matters of government directly. But he reinforced his position by self-advertising activity in the realm of patronage; he was associated with a number of court hand-outs, bread and bull fights for the populace of Madrid, *mercedes* and offices for the aristocracy, contracts for bankers and merchants.[25]

Influence over the queen and in matters of patronage were not the only factors in Valenzuela's meteoric rise. He was also helped by the poor performance of the Junta de Gobierno, an effete and supine body both collectively and, with the possible exception of the archbishop of Toledo, individually.[26] The count of Peñaranda was decrepit, the count of Villaumbrosa indolent, don Melchor de Navarra incompetent, the Constable semi-illiterate and as lacking in scruple as in ability, and don Diego Sarmiento de Valladares was one of the worst presidents of Castile in recent memory, solely concerned with keeping himself in office. If the aristocracy were to be judged by these representatives they had already failed the country. In these circumstances it was not surprising that a clever, bold and self-confident creature like Valenzuela should have come to monopolise the counsels of the queen. And new developments soon gave him a more positive political role.

On 6 November 1675 Charles II attained his majority at the age of fourteen. His reign lasted another twenty-five years, during which he was always ailing, often close to death, and increasingly neurotic in his behaviour. Now

[25] For contemporary material on Valenzuela see 'Documentos referentes a D. Fernando de Valenzuela, primer marqués de Villasierra', *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, lxvii, 135–457.

[26] Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 178–82.

that the king had come of age the Junta de Gobierno should have automatically terminated. This was probably one of the reasons why Don John had withdrawn from political activity, in the expectation of being called to power by constitutional means. He now returned to court, confident that his time had come. And again he was disappointed. As Charles II was obviously incapable of ruling alone, the existing team of ministers sought to share power by retaining the previous system, ignoring its obvious vulnerability to favouritism. On 7 November the Councils of State and Castile advised in *consulta* that the king should now sign decrees, but these should be supervised for two more years by the Junta de Gobierno under the presidency of the queen; Don John should be sent to Italy, and Valenzuela banished from court.[27] Don John left to re-think his tactics. As for Valenzuela he only went through the motions of complying. As a gesture he was nominally appointed ambassador to Venice; but the queen was only waiting for the dust to settle. Within a few months, in April 1676, he returned to court and, as Charles was dominated by his mother, soon became *valido* of the king as well as of the queen. Under their joint patronage he was loaded with appointments. He acquired offices such as master of the horse, governor and general of the coast of Andalucía, the title of marquis of Villasierra, and in particular the two things he most sought, elevation to the *grandeza* and appointment as *primer ministro*, with authorisation to lodge in the royal palace. If Valenzuela was not the first *valido* to be described as prime minister, he was the first to receive specific appointment as such. As a consequence of this a decree was issued in September 1676 dissolving the Junta de Gobierno; Valenzuela was given the right to attend all sessions of councils; and the presidents of councils were ordered to present themselves before him for regular conference on matters of government. Valenzuela was now at the height of his power, prime minister as well as *valido*.[28]

In a sense this was constitutional development. The prime minister had at last acquired a single public title, with unequivocal superiority over the presidents of councils and other ministers. But it was a frustrated development. In the first place, Valenzuela did not do much actual governing: he was more interested in patronage than policy. Secondly, his position was politically untenable. The higher nobility were outraged, regarding this as the last straw. As their existing representatives in the government were manifestly incapable of controlling events, the aristocracy began to plan concerted action outside the government.

[27] *Ibid.*, i, 211–26.
[28] *Ibid.*, i, 235–42; Valiente, *op. cit.*, 28–30, 103–5; Cánovas, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

3. The Revolt of the Grandees

Most of the royal ministers complied with the decree ordering them to confer with Valenzuela; but they did so reluctantly, and two of them, the duke of Osuna and the count of Peñaranda, refused to conform and openly joined the faction of malcontents. These were the higher nobility of Castile, offended in their social values by the dominance of the upstart Valenzuela; to them it was intolerable that their interests should be at the disposal of a vulgar outsider. Their candidate for office was Don John, a man of royal blood, acceptable on class grounds, and popular at large. And Don John became their spokesman. The aristocracy now met together, grouped themselves into a solid opposition, and declared themselves.

On 15 December 1676 they issued a manifesto signed by 24 leading nobles, among them Don John, the dukes of Alba, Osuna, Medina Sidonia, Arcos, Gandia, the duchess of Infantado, and the counts of Benavente and Monterrey. This *documento de la grandeza* attributed the country's disorder and discontent to 'the evil influence of the queen mother . . . and particularly the abominable promotion of don Fernando Valenzuela'.[29] It demanded that the king 'remove the queen mother totally and permanently from his presence, imprison don Fernando Valenzuela, and establish permanently at his side the Lord Don John of Austria'. The signatories undertook upon their 'honour, faith, and word as *caballeros*' to employ all effective means to secure these objectives 'without any reserve whatsoever', and to serve with their 'persons, houses, estates, rents and retainers'. The grandees were not completely unanimous. One of their number, Pedro de Aragon, refused to sign because he had been promised high office; others, like the duke of Medinaceli and the count of Oropesa, held aloof because they did not like the political implications of the document. And in the event the persons, estates and retainers of the grandees were not sufficient, or not sufficiently mobilised, to make a civil coup d'etat. It also needed the intervention of the army, the conspiratorial activity of Don John, and the support of the regions.

Don John had a base of power in Aragon, a region which he had cultivated for some time, posing as the defender of its *fueros* and the representative of its interests. Aragon was behind him and ready to move. He also had much support in Catalonia. There he was remembered as the general who had helped to drive out the French, the negotiator of favourable terms after the Catalan revolution, the viceroy who had mediated between Catalonia and Madrid. Following his subsequent visit in 1668 Don John had patronised the principality and built up a following. Catalans who believed in economic

[29] For a summary of the text see Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 244–45.

growth and saw their hopes frustrated by Madrid looked upon Don John as a champion who would win further victories for their *fueros* and open new channels for their trade.[30] Although he did not have a specifically regional support elsewhere in Spain, he had the aristocracy behind him. From Andalucía and the two Castiles the government received news that the grandees were arming their vassals and preparing to join Don John. Finally, in addition to regional and aristocratic support, Don John had the sympathy of two important institutions. The military regarded him as one of their own, a patron who would look after their careers; and his friends among the senior officers of the royal army stationed in Catalonia placed 600 cavalry at his disposal. The church, too, was well disposed, seeing him as a saviour who would restore traditional Spanish virtues to public life after the corruption of recent decades.

At this point there was a chance of civil war, for Valenzuela, unlike Nithard, was not responsible to a Junta de Gobierno, and he could have decreed the use of force to defend his regime. But he lacked the nerve. He did his best to secure his wealth and fled to the Escorial for asylum. Now isolated among aristocratic advisers, Charles wrote to Don John inviting him to 'come without delay to assist me in this crisis'. Don John did not need inviting. He was inciting the country to violence, giving heated instructions to his partisans:

> Make known to people of every sort that what the grandees and other subjects have recently effected at court has been done with the knowledge, influence and approval of the Lord Don John; and that His Highness is now moving to take issue with any Spaniard, good or bad, who, failing God, king and country, tries to undo it. Incite all honourable and faithful men to oppose these people, and to employ themselves only in their destruction.[31]

On 11 January 1677 Don John crossed from Aragon into Castile at the head of an army 15,000 strong, with most of the Aragonese aristocracy, and from Castile eighteen grandees and a flock of other nobility. The few ministers and nobles still around Charles II began to edge away; the Madrid garrison was disbanded; and Don John and the grandees entered the capital on 23 January virtually unopposed. They immediately secured the dismissal and banishment of Valenzuela, forced him out of his monastic asylum, and sent him as a prisoner to Consuegra. They were not satisfied until the king had stripped him of all his property and titles, including of course that of grandee, and exiled him to the Philippines. There he served a prison sentence

[30] Ferran Soldevila, *Història de Catalunya* (3 vols., Barcelona, 1935), ii, 345–50.
[31] Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 254.

of ten years. And he never saw Spain again. Waiting in Mexico for permission to return, he died from a horse-kick in January 1692. The rebels completed their work by insisting on the banishment of the queen mother to Toledo and the promotion to power of Don John.[32]

As an exercise in removing a prime minister this was one of the most vindictive in Spanish history. In its use of violence and terrorism the revolt of Don John and the nobility was a genuine *golpe de estado*. It was the first time a modern Spanish king had a government imposed upon him.[33] For this reason Don John is not to be classified as a *valido*, or even a prime minister. He did not advise the king, he coerced him. He was able to do this because he now had what he lacked in 1669 and 1675, the backing of almost all the aristocracy. On this occasion the grandees of Spain shed their political diffidence, if not their ineptitude, and acted together for the first time. The event which moved them was the formal promotion of Valenzuela to the premiership. Regarding Spain as an extension of their own estates, they were provoked in their honour, exclusivism and class consciousness when the king took his chief minister not from the natural ruling class but from the ranks of commoners or poor *hidalgos*. The savage sentence on Valenzuela was meant to be a warning against any further subversion of the social structure. The grandees did not revolt in order to re-establish personal monarchy, or to re-vitalise conciliar government, or to erect any institutional barrier against the absolute power of a prime minister. On the contrary, they sought to impose the personal rule of Don John, whom they regarded as their representative, a man who could be trusted to defend their group interest. This was not a political programme. As for Don John, he was seeking personal power, the power which had escaped him on two previous occasions.

The new leader was hailed as a political messiah.[34] In fact he was a *caudillo*, a strong man, a distributor of patronage, a ruler who improvised as he went along, living from day to day.[35] He rewarded the 'ins' and punished the 'outs'. Friends and creatures of Valenzuela were cruelly persecuted; and any leading noble who had not signed the grandees' manifesto was suspect. Other people were promoted, not on their merits, but on their record as rebels. The duke of Alba, for example, in spite of his notorious incompetence was appointed president of the Council of Italy. To satisfy his Aragonese supporters Don John insisted that the king visit Zaragoza. There the cortes

[32] *Ibid.*, i, 246–62.
[33] Maravall, *Teoría española del estado en el siglo XVII*, pp. 305–6, with some exaggeration, describes Don John as a forerunner of the modern dictator.
[34] For a contemporary account of events in 1677–78 see 'Diario de Noticias de 1677 a 1678', *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, lxvii, 69–133.
[35] Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 271–315, regards Don John as a *cacique*, or political boss.

voted a minimal grant—56,000 libras a year for eight years to support 1,500 troops—in return for cancellation of all previous debts to the crown and a promise not to request any further subsidy for the next twenty years. Indeed the price of Don John's success was aristocratic immunity. From the grandees of Castile he received little financial support. When in 1678 he requested a *donativo*, one after another of the higher aristocracy, their rents and estates now removed from service, declined to contribute. As usual, it was the bankers, merchants and *asentistas* who had to dip into their pockets, and the common taxpayers who had to increase their quota.

As fast as money was raised it was devoured in war. Louis XIV was perhaps Don John's worst enemy, for it was he who caused Spain's rising defence costs. After four years of precarious peace France had invaded the Low Countries again in 1672. In the subsequent war Spain and her allies—the United Provinces and the Empire—suffered one crippling defeat after another. Spanish armies were hard pressed in the Low Countries, Catalonia, and Sicily, where local insurrection gave France an opportunity to intervene. At the Peace of Nymegen (August–September 1678) Spain had no credit, and was forced to cede Franche-Comté (hardly worth fighting for) and further strategic territory in the Netherlands. Loss of distant provinces was less important than the strain on the Spanish economy. Now more than ever the government needed to economise. From 1677 Castile began to endure its most profound economic crisis of the seventeenth century, perhaps in its entire history.[36] In this area of government Don John could provide no leadership. As the economic crisis worsened and the government looked on helplessly, there was growing disillusionment. A satirical paper circulating in Madrid asked: 'Are there less taxes? Less *donativos*? Has the price of food come down? Have the fleets been repaired? Have we lost less in war? Are the prospects better that the people will be relieved, the kingdom saved and our condition improved?' Amidst mounting discontent Don John began to lose two specific bases of support, the army and the church. After a disastrous war and an ignominious peace, the military were now unoccupied and demoralised, and Don John had no panacea for their complaints. Meanwhile the hierarchy were having second thoughts about the messianic mission they had attributed to the new leader; their doubts were reinforced when they discovered that the clergy had less tax immunity than the aristocracy and were made to pay a higher *subsidio* as well as a *donativo*.

Don John reacted to criticism in two ways. He reshuffled his ministers, placing hard-core supporters, most of them second-rate, in presidencies, councils, and viceroyalties. And he silenced opposition by the classical

[36] See below, pp. 283–9.

methods of the *caudillo*, driving his enemies into prison or exile. The crown itself was his prisoner. He had the king's every movement watched, every public appearance and audience supervised, every letter opened. But this was no substitute for policy. With his rule disintegrating, his government empty of ideas, and resentment growing, Don John was only saved from political disaster by his death on 17 September 1679.

4. Return to Government

While the fall of Valenzuela brought to an end the seventeenth-century series of *validos*, the death of Don John terminated Spain's brief experiment with *caudillismo*. Between 1680 and 1691 Spanish government was rebuilt on sounder foundations and, in spite of the last leaderless years of Habsburg rule, left a legacy of improved administration. Charles II himself contributed nothing to this development. He occasionally awoke to political affairs during interludes of better health, but in general his physical and mental abnormality forced him to abandon government to other men. These were prime ministers, not *validos*, for paradoxically to abdicate responsibility to a *valido* a king needed a modicum of determination in order to sustain his favourite against opposition. The new prime ministers reached power not as the personal choice of the king but through intense political intrigue. The successful candidates were a compromise between the needs of government and the demands of the aristocracy. They therefore combined some qualities of statesmanship, the minimum requirement of a country in prostration, and social qualifications, the test of their acceptability to the nobles. They were not slaves of their class, but they had to work within the existing social structure and they inevitably found this an obstacle to reform. Moreover a new dimension had been added to politics. In 1679 Charles II married Marie Louise of Orléans, niece of Louis XIV. The marriage had political implications. Having defeated Spain in war, the French now hoped to dominate her in peace and diplomacy; while Spanish opinion preferred a French to an Austrian marriage on the ground that one Austrian in the royal family—the queen mother—was enough. But this, and Charles's subsequent marriage to Mariana of Neuburg, brought strong-willed queens and their diplomatic backers into Spanish politics and intensified the struggle for control of the crown.

After the death of Don John it took some time to reconcile the various interests and to find a prime minister acceptable to the aristocracy, the administration, and the two queens (Charles's mother and wife). Eventually, on 21 February 1680, the king appointed the duke of Medinaceli, explaining 'I now recognise that the form of government appropriate to my Monarchy and the

exigencies of the moment both call for a prime minister'.[37] Medinaceli, one of the wealthiest of the grandees, was an unassuming and uninspiring man with administrative experience as president of the Council of the Indies.[38] He was not exclusively tied to class interests—he had not signed the manifesto of the grandees in 1676—and he did not claim to be a saviour of the nation. He saw his duty more simply—to relieve the king of all responsibility of government, to use the existing administration to provide law, order, and a sense of direction, and in particular to see the country through the great economic crisis of the years after 1677. He maintained the hard deflationary policy already devised by the financial administration.[39] But he also thought beyond economic restraint, necessary though it was. In an attempt to get the economy moving again he brought in a new president of the Council of Finance, Carlos de Herrera, former councillor of the Indies and of Castile, governor of Seville, and a man familiar with economic problems and merchant interests.[40] Medinaceli showed an interest in commercial-colonial reform untypical of the higher aristocracy and of his predecessors. He further strengthened his administration by recruiting José de Veitia Linaje, former treasurer of the Casa de Contratación, secretary of the Council of the Indies, and author of a celebrated treatise on American trade. Appointed *Secretario del Despacho Universal* in April 1682, Veitia Linaje worked as a kind of special consultant to the prime minister on plans to revive colonial trade and its yield. There was a vigorous attack on the more flagrant abuses of foreign commercial penetration at Seville–Cadiz, and greater attention was paid to imperial defence.[41] These efforts did not yield noticeable returns. According to the government's own statistics, of the 27,000 toneladas of merchandise exported to America in 1686 only 1,500 belonged to Spanish merchants.[42] Indeed there was no recovery of Spain's American trade before the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, for the first time in decades the government itself, as distinct from the bureaucracy, showed an awareness of the problems and an anxiety to tackle them.

The fabric of Spanish life was too exhausted to be capable of sudden rejuvenation. The most that the Medinaceli administration could do was to provide political stability, recruit new talent, and improve the standard of government. It also had the courage to stand by its severe deflationary policy, and it refused to take the easy way out by manipulating the monetary

[37] On the Medinaceli administration see Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 352–424.
[38] E. Schäfer, *El Consejo real y supremo de las Indias* (2 vols., Seville, 1935–47), i, 277.
[39] See below, pp. 285–7.
[40] Schäfer, *op. cit.*, i, 363.
[41] Girard, *Le commerce français à Séville et Cadix au temps des Habsbourgs*, pp. 159–70.
[42] Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 445.

system as previous administrations had done. This meant that life continued to be hard for the mass of the people, and even the aristocracy felt the pinch. On the basis of reports of acute distress in the peninsula, Louis XIV struck once again, invading the Low Countries and Catalonia. This was a small war, it is true, but it imposed painful defence costs and yet another punishing peace treaty (Ratisbon, August 1684), which deprived Spain of Luxemburg.

By 1684 Medinaceli was living on promise rather than performance and he had exhausted his credit with his sponsors. He agreed therefore to share the burden with someone else. In June 1684 the count of Oropesa, a member of the Council of State since 1680, was appointed president of the Council of Castile. Oropesa was of sufficient stature to turn his appointment into virtual co-government, and with the capricious support of the two queens and of disappointed aristocrats he gradually eased out Medinaceli. The latter resigned in April 1685. Charles II neither chose his prime ministers nor dismissed them: he had them imposed upon him; and he accepted the arranged succession of Oropesa without demur.

The author of a paper written some years later to discredit Oropesa described him as follows:

> He possesses considerable talent, sound judgement, and wide knowledge of affairs acquired from study. He applies himself to business, has good understanding, and a clear exposition. He is easy in his relationships and moderate in his conduct. All this may be enough for a good minister; but it is not enough for a good prime minister.[43]

Yet Oropesa was better qualified for the office than any other candidate. Between the needs of government and the demands of faction his appointment seemed to tip the balance towards the former. He was a man of ideas, capable and energetic, whose only apparent disadvantage was the possession of a notoriously pushing wife. Oropesa was also favoured with a first-rate colleague in the executive. Veitia Linaje had resigned along with Medinaceli and he was succeeded in the *Secretaría del Despacho* by Manuel Francisco de Lira, former diplomat, secretary for Italian affairs in the Council of State, an able if intolerant man.

Oropesa stood for a policy of fiscal, administrative and ecclesiastical reform, and was ready to boost the economy by a moderate dose of reflation.[44] Impressed by the French style of government, and suspecting the efficiency of the Council of Finance, he assigned fiscal affairs to a new office, the

[43] *Ibid.*, i, 419.
[44] For a fuller account of this policy see below, pp. 288–9. On the events of 1685–88 see the contemporary comments in 'Cartas del duque de Montalto a D. Pedro Ronquillo, embajador en Inglaterra (1685–1688)', *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, lxxix, 299–475.

Superintendencia de Hacienda. There were few outstanding candidates for the appointment, and imitation of French methods could not in itself revive Spain's finances and economy. But the experiment is chiefly interesting as an early attempt to construct a ministry outside the conciliar system; as such it anticipated the Bourbon reforms of the eighteenth century. The Spanish Colbert was the marquis of los Vélez, a benevolent and conscientious man though not greatly endowed with intelligence. According to current scurrility he was dissatisfied with his previous appointment as master of the queen's horse because excessive obesity prevented him from actually mounting a horse. As superintendent of finance he was energetic enough and soon produced an extensive memorandum as a working paper for the preparation of a new tax structure.[45] Oropesa and los Vélez thus gave a new stimulus to fiscal reform, and this was designed not only to reduce the chronic budget deficit but also to introduce an element of social justice into taxation. If their plans did not meet the success they deserved this was due to the opposition of vested interests, the aristocracy, the church, and office-holders. But a number of minor measures were implemented, and monetary readjustment brought some relief to the economy. Like many rulers who shelve issues, Oropesa was forced to divert his fiscal ideas into safer channels by the appointment of royal commissions. He created a *junta de medios* with membership drawn from the various councils and presided over by los Vélez to consider reform proposals; and to give greater weight to these proposals he appointed a *junta de estado*.

Frustrated on the financial front, Oropesa turned his attention to reform of the bureaucracy and the church.[46] Both institutions suffered from excessive recruitment. Oropesa campaigned against the number of false vocations in the church; he circulated the bishops requesting a temporary suspension of ordinations, and he sought to restrict the foundation of new religious houses. Under his initiative a special junta investigated the power of the Inquisition. The committee criticised the inflated jurisdiction, privilege and immunity of the tribunal; it recommended that there should be no excommunication for temporal reasons, that there should be right of appeal before secular courts against unjust sentences, that the tribunal's *fueros* should be more closely defined, and that its fiscal frauds should be investigated. It was easier to make these proposals than to implement them, but Oropesa kept up the pressure and achieved something, if only in ventilating the problem.

To threaten the aristocracy with taxation, the church with reform, and the bureaucracy with reduction, was to alienate the most powerful sectors of

[45] Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 446–47.

[46] On administrative reform see below, pp. 275–77, 290–95, 297–300.

Spanish society. The Oropesa administration was not a failure; it made a contribution to Spain's slow recovery from prolonged depression, as will be seen. But many of its proposals were precocious and out of joint with the time and the place. They earned for Oropesa great unpopularity, which meant accusations of bad government by the interested parties opposed to his reforms. His opponents secured an ally in the new queen. After the death of Maria Luisa in February 1689 Charles II married Mariana of Neuburg, daughter of the Elector Palatine and sister of the Emperor Leopold. She was a calculating woman who easily dominated her husband and became the centre of much political intrigue. She also disliked prime ministers. But the Austrian marriage had further repercussions for Oropesa. It provoked Louis XIV to declare war on Spain yet again. As usual there were heavy defence costs with nothing to show for them, only predictable defeats in the Low Countries and Italy and the inevitable invasion of Catalonia. The prime minister was now vulnerable on domestic and foreign policy alike. Under pressure from the queen and a number of discontented grandees, Charles was persuaded, much against his will, to demand Oropesa's resignation; this he did on 25 June 1691.[47]

After the fall of Oropesa the government drifted without a prime minister. Queen Mariana, appropriating the sovereignty belonging to her husband, filled the Council of State with her own clients. Into the *Secretaría del Despacho* she put a particularly servile and uncultivated creature, Juan de Angulo, nicknamed *el Mulo*; and he was succeeded by another client of the queen, though a more presentable one, Alonso Carnero. In addition, a number of greedy German advisers were provided for in one way or another. But the Castilian aristocracy also had to be placated. There were so many aspirants to high office and the premiership that power was artificially divided among a number of competing candidates. On the advice of the duke of Montalto Charles was constrained to issue a decree in 1693, the so-called *planta de gobierno*, constituting a kind of senior junta of ministers and dividing the spoils among them. The successful candidates received the titles of lieutenant general and governor and were assigned different regions in which to deploy their talents. The Constable was appointed lieutenant general and governor of Old Castile; Andalucía and the Canaries went to the Admiral, the count of Melgar; Aragon and Catalonia to the count of Monterrey; and New Castile to Montalto himself.[48] This arrangement was followed by further manoeuvrings which reduced the four supremos to a triumvirate. Montalvo took the government of the Aragonese kingdoms and Navarre, with the presidency of the Council of the Indies; Galicia, Asturias

[47] Lira had already resigned from the Secretaría del Despacho; see Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 542–45.

[48] *Ibid.*, ii, 45–46; Cánovas, *op. cit.*, pp. 383–84.

and the two Castiles went to the Constable, a singularly stupid and overbearing man; and Andalucía and the Canaries to the Admiral. And the triumvirate was finally reduced to two, Montalto and the Admiral. These proceeded to squabble over the plunder, seconded by their respective factions, and the ridiculous territorial divisions gradually disappeared. In 1696 the queen demoted Montalto and dismissed Carnero. By now Spain was virtually without government, for the sole survivor from the *planta de gobierno*, the Admiral, dared not make a move without the queen's approval. And she was interested in other things than the internal government of Spain.

One of the great obstacles to Spain's recovery in the second half of the seventeenth century was French imperialism. Any neighbour of France could expect to suffer from aggression, but Spain was particularly vulnerable because of the various fronts she presented. Territorially she lost to Louis XIV little of real importance though he kept whittling away her possessions in the Rhineland and the Netherlands, and repeatedly struck her in northern Italy and Catalonia. The real cost to Spain was in men and money. Although she was still capable of sending subsidies to her overseas armies, these had to be paid in silver, which was in short supply in Spain where the currency was almost exclusively vellon. As for the peninsula itself Spain's only defences were the patriotism of her subjects and their notorious aversion to foreign invasion or domination. The aristocracy no longer fulfilled a military role and material defences were almost non-existent. When a decree for general conscription was issued in July 1691 it was stated that the country had 'insufficient ships and troops for its defence . . . and in most towns one can hardly find a musket, arquebus or pike'.[49] So Spain was in no position to resist Louis XIV's ultimate aggression, the War of the League of Augsburg, which brought further defeats in Milan, the Netherlands and Catalonia. Yet she emerged relatively unscathed: by the Peace of Ryswick (September 1697) Louis XIV returned all the gains he had made since the Peace of Nymegen. Spain's escape owed little to her own efforts. It was a consequence of two other factors. The combined pressure of the two great maritime powers, England and Holland, was at last turning the balance against France. And Louis XIV now had his eye on a greater prize, to be secured by diplomacy rather than war, namely the whole of the Spanish Monarchy, or at very least a substantial part of it.[50]

By 1696–97 it was clear that Charles II had only a few years to live and would remain childless. An heir had to be found for Spain and her empire.

[49] Quoted by Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVIII*, p. 368, n. 4.

[50] See M. A. Thomson, 'Louis XIV and the Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., iv (1954), 111–34.

The succession problem now obsessed the political life of the country and held government in complete suspense. For the real test of monarchy is the succession, and over this there was profound uncertainty. The two serious claimants were France and Austria, the former through Louis XIV's marriage to the Spanish Infanta, María Teresa, the latter through the emperor's marriage to Margarita Teresa. French and Austrian diplomatic pressure in Madrid, and the factions engendered in support of the rival causes, reduced the administration to impotence. Charles II suffered mental anguish in these years and in his desperate search for enlightenment had recourse even to exorcism. After intense lobbying, conflicting advice and constant vacillation, he finally made his will (2 October 1700) and left the Spanish dominions undivided to the French candidate, Philip, duke of Anjou, grandson of Louis XIV. This decision, the one moment of grandeur in his whole life, was influenced chiefly by the universal desire among Spaniards to keep their Monarchy and empire intact under a strong ruler who would reside in Spain.

Charles II, browbeaten for so long by the women of his family, was most influenced in his last days by Cardinal Portocarrero, archbishop of Toledo. On 29 October 1700 he signed a decree, doubtless prepared by his mentor, ordering that in the event of his utter incapacity, the cardinal should govern with complete power in his name.[51] But Portocarrero only enjoyed his power for three days. On 1 November Charles died, and on the following day, in expectation of the arrival of the new king, a Junta de Gobierno was established.

[51] Valiente, *op. cit.*, pp. 35, 191–92.

CHAPTER X

THE END OF HABSBURG SPAIN

1. Promise and Prejudice in Eastern Spain

In the last decades of Habsburg rule Spain resembled a corpse, picked at by noble parasites and foreign marauders. This, it would seem, was the horrifying nemesis of a society which turned its face against the world and the times in which it lived. Retribution was harsh and perhaps inevitable. Yet the conventional picture of Spain's final prostration has been overdrawn, or at least has lacked a sense of contrast and of movement. From the 1680's, amidst the ruins of government and economy, the country began to stir from its inertia and renew its life. Reform was in the air. Its authors were few in number, uncertain of themselves and frustrated by their fellows. But they cleared away some of the debris of the past and set up signposts for the future. This movement of recovery could be observed obscurely in Castile, more clearly perhaps in the periphery.

Eastern Spain moved independently of Castile. The second half of the seventeenth century was an Indian summer of provincial autonomy. After the costly failure to impose constitutional and fiscal uniformity, the central government left the regions severely alone. Don John appealed to Aragon and Catalonia—the first Spanish politician to do so—not to procure the vindication of their rights but to seek the support of rights already vindicated. To leave the regions alone was to leave them in the hands of their governing classes. In Aragon this perpetuated stagnation, and the province became an economic colony of France. In Catalonia it led to the first stage of economic advance. And in Valencia it led to peasant revolt.

In the last decades of the seventeenth century Catalonia began to emerge from its prolonged stupor.[1] It was assisted by two institutional conditions. Monetary autonomy saved it from the succession of state-imposed inflation and deflation experienced by Castile. In Catalonia monetary policy was determined by commercial not fiscal considerations. After 1659 the province enjoyed relative monetary stability; and it escaped the worst effects of the brutal deflation imposed on Castile in 1680. In the period 1688–99, however, Catalonia had enough inflation, without a corresponding wage rise, to

[1] J. Vicens Vives, *Manual de Historia económica de España*, con la colaboración de J. Nadal Oller (Barcelona, 1959), pp. 422–23.

ensure rapid accumulation of profits and conditions for further investment.[2] Another stimulus was provided by the freedom of commerce imposed in the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659). While the neighbouring kingdom of Aragon was smothered by protection, which simply favoured low-quality goods and contraband, the Catalans enjoyed few tariff advantages and were forced to improve their own performance. Under the challenge of freer trade their textile industry underwent some renewal and expansion, shedding archaic privileges and equipping itself to compete more vigorously with French, English and Dutch goods.[3]

After a period of stagnation in 1664–74, maritime trade became more active from the late 1670's. On the evidence of *periatge* (guild merchant duty), it moved strongly ahead about 1680, and by the end of the century had expanded well beyond its level at the beginning.[4] In the late 1690's traffic in the port of Barcelona was almost double that in 1600. Barcelona now housed large-scale business firms, and these were turning from the narrow, preempted Mediterranean market towards the outer world, towards Cadiz and Lisbon, buying colonial goods—sugar, cacao and tobacco—and seeking to export Catalan products to the colonial markets.[5] The Catalan merchant marine was re-constructed and armed to deal with corsairs. While Barcelona was the centre of commercial activity, actual production developed elsewhere. Artisan conditions in the capital itself were still depressed in the second half of the seventeenth century, particularly in the silk and textile industries. The provinces on the other hand were forging ahead. Wine and brandy production experienced a minor boom, being exported to all parts of Spain, particularly Andalucía, where it was beginning to break into the Indies trade. Brandy was also sold to the English and the Dutch, and this further outlet was sufficient to cause expansion of vineyards, while some of the returns went into other local industries. Textile production in the provinces was doing much better than in Barcelona, and showing signs of assimilating technical improvement from France. And the minor ports of the principality were active in small-scale shipbuilding. This economic decentralisation was due not only to lower taxes in the provinces but also to rural population growth, which made the interior a good source of supply for labour. Whatever the reason, the inflation of agricultural prices was a sign of accumulation of rural profits.[6] In this period the bandits disappeared and the farmers got to work.

[2] Vilar, *La Catalogne dans l'Espagne Moderne*, i, 639–41, 646.

[3] José Fontana Lázaro, 'Sobre el comercio exterior de Barcelona en la segunda mitad del siglo XVII. Notas para una interpretación de la coyuntura catalana', *Estudios de Historia Moderna*, v (1955 [1957]), 197–219.

[4] This duty rose from 4,000 pounds a year in 1664–65, to 5,997 in 1680–81, to 9,785 in 1698–99. Smith, *The Spanish Guild Merchant*, p. 140.

[5] Vilar, *La Catalogne dans l'Espagne Moderne*, i, 648–49.

[6] *Ibid.*, i, 650–53.

The atmosphere was heady enough to produce a number of ambitious projects for promoting foreign trade. These were a common enough phenomenon in the seventeenth century, but the Catalan proposals, unlike those of earlier Castilian *arbitristas*, were a sign of optimism and incipient revival rather than a reaction to depression. The ideas came, about 1680, from individuals and consortiums who were candidates for the lease of the Barcelona municipal taxes and were capable of guaranteeing on their own security capital amounting to between 140,000 and 170,000 Catalan pounds. The type of organisation canvassed was the chartered company, as can be seen in the proposals of Narciso Feliu de la Peña, historian, economist and businessman.[7] In 1681 Feliu outlined a plan for a trading company on the model of those existing in Holland, France and England. It would be formed in Barcelona with capital subscribed by 50 shareholders; it would make loans to captains of ships, merchants and manufacturers, and would finance the construction of shipping; and it would send two ships a year to America, exporting fruits, clothing, and manufactures of iron, copper and glass.

The economic recovery of Catalonia in this period can be exaggerated. Projects like those of Feliu probably overestimated the prospects of the principality. Yet almost immediately after the change of regime in Madrid in 1700 the Catalans again tried to secure official admission to the Indies trade; and when they failed they soon began to force their way in regardless of the law. Their ability to engage in overseas trade did not develop overnight. It was the result of lengthy, if confused, preparation in the previous decades when Catalonia disengaged itself from the general depression lying over the peninsula. And as Catalonia began to emerge from its former myopia so it became less inhibited in its attitude towards the rest of Spain. Between 1653 and 1697 Barcelona contributed the considerable sum of 6,377,591 pounds to the crown, financial co-operation of a kind which Olivares had not managed to secure. In 1674 the Catalans formally objected to being classified as foreigners in Cadiz—and to their goods being taxed as such on landing. While not forgoing any of their regional prerogatives, they argued that Catalans were subjects of the crown and were 'Spaniards, Catalonia being indubitably of Spain'.[8] The crown acknowledged the justice of the complaint and by decree of 30 November 1674 removed the Catalans from the jurisdiction of the consul for foreigners.

Valencia, like Catalonia, enjoyed undisturbed possession of its *fueros* in the reign of Charles II. The crown exercised a limited power through its viceroy and its jurisdiction over a number of towns in the province. But the viceroy

[7] *Ibid.*, i, 653–67; Roland Dennis Hussey, *The Caracas Company 1728–1784. A Study in the History of Spanish Monopolistic Trade* (Cambridge, Mass., 1934), pp. 23–24.
[8] Carrera Pujal, *Historia política y económica de Cataluña*, i, 442–43, ii, 312.

had to operate within the framework of the *fueros*. The city of Valencia was administered by the Council of Hundred, its membership drawn from the various social groups, the majority representation, though not the greatest influence, being held by members of the guilds. And the *Diputación*, or standing committee of the cortes consisting of two nobles, two clerics and two commoners, supervised observance of the *fueros* and the administration of taxes. Even in towns under royal jurisdiction the king's power was confined virtually to taxation, the yield of which was consumed locally. Most towns, and their inhabitants, were in noble or ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and here the king's writ hardly ran. Some of these nobles held titles of Castile, such as the duke of Medinaceli and the duke of Infantado; others, like the duke of Gandia, were great territorial magnates, virtual sovereigns on their own estates.

The most significant event in Valencia's modern history was the expulsion of the moriscos. This massive amputation crippled the province for many decades after 1609.[9] The consequences were felt outside the rural economy. For the numerous *censos* (mortgage loans) on property farmed by moriscos were supplied from capital owned by urban groups and ecclesiastical institutions. These investments were now at great risk. The crown sought to compensate landowners for loss of their labour force by, among other things, reducing the interest rate on *censos*; but in any case the difficulties of repopulating morisco farmlands meant that payments on *censos* were often in arrears or in default. Thus the expulsion of the moriscos first damaged agricultural production, then hurt the feudal aristocracy, and finally penalised the latter's creditors; many of these were from urban middle groups, and were forced to consume their savings, which precipitated the failure of the municipal bank of Valencia in 1613.[10] While the landed aristocracy were compensated to some degree for loss of their morisco vassals, they were also in a powerful position to dictate the terms of re-settlement. Valencia lost over 25 per cent. of its 450,000 inhabitants, and most of those expelled were tenants or vassals of the aristocracy. There was no great rush of immigrants to fill the vacuum: by the middle of the eighteenth century Valencia's population still had not reached the level of 1609.[11] The bargaining power of the aristocracy, therefore, did not derive from surplus of labour but from sheer territorial sovereignty. A few colonists entered from outside the province, and there was

[9] Juan Reglá, 'La expulsión de los moriscos y sus consecuencias en la economía valenciana', *Hispania*, xxiii (1963), 200–18; Eduardo Asensio Salvadó, 'El arbitrista Jerónimo Ibáñez de Salt y su programa de recuperación de la economía valenciana en 1638', *Estudios de Historia Moderna*, iv (1954), 255–72.
[10] Reglá, 'La expulsión de los moriscos y sus consecuencias en la economía valenciana', *op. cit.*, pp. 216–17.
[11] See above, pp. 50–54, 155–6.

some internal migration as artisans from the towns and peasants from more depressed areas moved into morisco farms in search of a living. What they found was hardly a colonist's dream.

In the southern part of the province the newcomers were settled on the great estates of the dukes of Gandia and Maqueda, the marquises of Guadalest, Denia and Albaida, and the counts of Cocentaina and Real. The terms of vassalage were harsh and extortionate. A typical example is provided by the settlement of Muro in the jurisdiction of the count of Cocentaina. The new tenants owed their lord tithes and first-fruits; they forfeited all common land to the lord, could not move without his permission, and were bound to stay for at least five years; they had no property rights except by grace and favour of the lord, who also reserved to himself all civil and criminal cases in first instance; the establishment of bakeries, shops and taverns was monopolised by the lord; tenants had to grind their corn only in the lord's mill, and they were forbidden to buy flour from outside; anyone manufacturing anything had to pay the lord 10 per cent. of production; on wines they had to pay a quarter of the product, and on sugar half of the canes collected.[12] These were only a number of major items of the pact; and similar terms were imposed by the duke of Gandia and the marquis of Albaida. There was no escape from an exclusively seigneurial relationship. The nobles—and the church—held all the cards: they dominated the apparatus of government; they owned the land; and they possessed jurisdiction. There was nothing to prevent them interpreting the pacts to their own advantage. The agrarian economy of Valencia, therefore, was rebuilt not by a free peasantry but on the backs of semi-servile vassals. This was one of the more glaring of the many opportunities missed by Habsburg government, an example of its crass neglect of responsibility and of its tendency to strengthen rather than loosen the existing social structure.

On top of the burdens of their vassalage the peasants of Valencia suffered a long series of calamities in the course of the seventeenth century—conscription, taxes, bandits, locusts, bubonic plague, earthquakes, the whole range of nation-wide afflictions in miniature. Even so, many of these peasants had managed to pull themselves up and to improve their economic position. Yet their very success was cruelly turned against them. Grain harvests in Valencia were very good in most years of Charles II's reign, but while this lowered prices for the consumer it could spell disaster for the producer. The combination of rich harvests and a reduced population caused a continual decrease in the price of grain and damaged the prospects of commercial farmers, men

[12] Francisco de P. Momblanch y Gonzalbez, *La segunda Germanía del reino de Valencia* (Alicante, 1957), pp. 19–27, 43–49.

of previous substance who had been accumulating property since the expulsion of the moriscos and who often owned seigneurial rents to lords. Their dissatisfaction was probably a key factor in the great peasant upheaval of 1693 . . . which attempted to get seigneurial rents lowered during this troubled period'.[13]

Valencia was a bastion of noble privilege. At least three-quarters of the surface area was under secular seigneurial jurisdiction. At the top was a group of eight magnates—Infantado, Lerma and Maqueda were notorious examples—who drew high rents from the Valencian fiefs but usually lived and spent outside the kingdom. If to these are added the middle nobility and lower gentry, total seigneurial rents in the seventeenth century came to 974,565 *lluires*, out of a total agrarian product of 4,676,000 *lluires*. The Valencian aristocracy therefore took about one-fifth of the output of the rural economy in feudal dues.[14] Many of these dues were taken in kind, and share-cropping, as distinct from morisco-type labour services, became common after the expulsion among incoming settlers, the going rate varying from one-third to one-fifth of the harvest. On top of tithes, taxes and seigneurial monopolies, these were harsh rates. By the last decade of the century the situation of the Valencian peasants was hopeless, and in desperation they had recourse to lawsuits against injustice and abuse. The territorial magnates, lay and ecclesiastical, were a closely-knit group, with common interests and a united front. There was no rift in their defences, and they cursorily dismissed requests for the lowering of seigneurial dues or change of any kind. The peasants had no representation in regional institutions: the lay and ecclesiastical nobility controlled two of the three estates of the cortes of Valencia, and they also dominated the *Diputación*. As far as the peasants were concerned the *fueros* of Valencia were a savage mockery of constitutionalism, and they were forced to seek their own remedies. A clandestine movement began to take shape, centred round the Játiva region of southern Valencia and under the leadership of Francisco García Menor, a farmer from Ráfol de Almunia in the jurisdiction of the marquis of Almunia. By the early 1690's something like a peasant league existed, and its leaders initiated litigation before the viceroy, seeking a reduction of seigneurial dues and services on the ground that ancient privileges granted by the kings of Valencia exempted them from these exactions. But *fueros* were not for peasants. The marquis of Castel-Rodrigo issued a series of viceregal edicts denying their claims and declaring that in the post-morisco settlement the lords had acquired property and fiscal rights over tenants, that these had been confirmed by royal grant, and that the settlers had known the terms and accepted them. The peasants

[13] Casey, *The Kingdom of Valencia*, p. 76.
[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 102–3.

then took their case to Madrid and petitioned the king, with no better result. From the church they could expect no support. The archbishop of Valencia, Fray Juan Tomás de Rocabertí, a lord of numerous vassals, issued a pastoral letter (8 July 1693) admonishing the clergy under pain of major excommunication to explain in pulpit and confessional the grave sin committed by those who without just cause withheld the services and dues owed to their lords.

The tension broke in the summer of 1693 when peasants refused to share harvest products with their lords in the customary proportions. On 9 July 1693 the duke of Gandia's bailiffs imprisoned four peasants of the village of Villalonga for not paying their dues. Peasants in the rest of the *señorío* came out in revolt and released the prisoners, and the movement swept through the estates of the marquis of Albaida, the count of Cocentaina and other lords. Soon the insurgents numbered about 1,000 and were recruiting more. Francisco García was appointed *síndico* and assumed political direction, sending out emissaries throughout the province. And military command was conferred on José Navarro, a surgeon of Muro, who took the title *General del Eixercit dels Agermanats*, thus recalling the other *Germanía*, or brotherhood, of the 1520's.[15] The rebel forces were organised into companies, eight in all, and captains were appointed; and as their numbers grew, to about 2,000, villages came to their assistance with supplies. The plan was to assemble as large a force as possible and then march on the viceregal capital to place their cause before the crown and seek redress.

But the viceroy denounced the rebels as traitors and sent an army against them. On 15 July near the village of Cela de Núñez the peasant forces were scattered; a number of prisoners were taken and the rest fled in disorder to the mountains. The viceroy then offered an amnesty and a hearing to the rank and file; but to the leaders he offered nothing, and he placed a large price on the heads of the two principals, dead or alive. The villagers took the bait and again tried legal action, with no more success than before. So the movement was split, and three weeks after its beginning the rebellion was virtually over. García was never captured; but Navarro was taken and executed. Lesser rebels were sent to the galleys or heavily fined. In spite of the harsh repression the spirit of revolt was not extinguished. After 1700, during the War of Succession, the peasants of Valencia made another attempt to throw off their seigneurial yoke. But the Habsburg cause which they espoused was doomed, and the victory of Philip V was a victory for the landed aristocracy.

[15] See *Spain under the Habsburgs*, i, 46–7.

2. Castile's Tragic Decade

While Catalonia rebuilt its economy and Valencia erupted in social conflict, Castile passively endured its fate, trapped in a vicious circle of depression. A faulty agrarian structure and periodic pestilence precipitated demographic recession, which further diminished the consumer market for agricultural and industrial products. Falling output affected exports, which meant that Castile was unable to compete for European markets and even lost a major part of its American market. Shortage of foreign and colonial earnings perpetuated stagnation at home. This was almost a classical example of depression feeding upon itself. And in the background was a further factor, imperfectly understood by Spaniards who still believed that they possessed an El Dorado across the Atlantic if only it could be made to yield its wealth to them instead of to foreigners. They refused to accept that a fundamental shift of power had taken place within the Hispanic world, that the economic balance had now moved towards America, and that Americans now produced their wealth for themselves and not for Spain.

Castile was hardly in a position to endure more. Yet its worst crisis, incredibly, was still to come. Between 1677 and 1687 the country was struck by every conceivable adversity, reducing an already enfeebled frame to its last gasp. In this decade Castilians were visited by scourges of biblical proportions. The most relentless enemy was their own climate.[16] This was not a new experience. The countryside had suffered from the very beginning of the reign. There had been harvest failures in 1665–68, causing a sharp rise in the price of agricultural products, with wheat more than doubling its price between 1663 and 1668.[17] In 1670 crops in the province of Granada were destroyed by locusts. But these were only preliminary warnings.

In the spring of 1677 torrential rainfall caused heavy loss of crops in southern Spain and led to famine conditions in Andalucía. This was followed by two years of drought in the same region, and then an earthquake in October 1680. After a brief respite Andalucía had two more years of drought in 1682–83, followed in the winter of 1683–84 by a great deluge. Rain fell incessantly in the whole of Andalucía; rivers overflowed their banks, crops were inundated, and the few cattle that remained after recent droughts were swept away in floods. In the province of Granada the first four months of 1684 were like a monsoon; crops, roads, bridges and mills were destroyed or impaired, and in the city of Granada alone 6,000 houses were damaged. After

[16] See the striking studies by Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, 'La crisis de Castilla en 1677–1687', *Revista Portuguesa de Historia*, x (1962), 436–51, and Henry Kamen, 'The Decline of Castile: the last crisis', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., xvii (1964–65), 63–76.

[17] Earl J. Hamilton, *War and Prices in Spain* 1651–1800 (Cambridge, Mass., 1947), pp. 238–39.

this catastrophe Andalucía could expect no harvest in 1684, and three years later the region suffered yet another drought. Meanwhile northern and central Spain had not escaped. There was heavy flooding in 1679–81 and crops were further destroyed by hail. The great rainstorms of 1684 reached as far as La Mancha, and in 1685 there was severe drought in Galicia.

These meteorological conditions were bound to affect food supplies. Andalucía in particular became a major disaster area. Seville, normally one of the granaries of the south and a rich source of oil and livestock, reached the depths of depression. In 1684 the city authorities reported to the government on the plight of their people after eight years of drought or near-drought:

> The culmination of these afflictions came in the calamitous year of 1683, when drought left the fields barren and devoid of crops; food shortage became extremely critical, and people in their misery scratched the earth for grass and roots to keep alive.[18]

The chronicler Francisco Godoy recorded:

> During the whole of 1683, until the end of November, there was not a drop of rain. Almost the whole of Andalucía was in absolute drought. The crops were parched with heat, the trees burnt up, cereals destroyed. . . . Bread became so scarce and expensive that many people perished of hunger. No one in Andalucía escaped privation. There was a stock farmer whose 1,600 head of cattle was reduced to 200 because of drought and lack of fodder. . . . And I know another person who in addition to losing his cattle got only two bales of straw out of the 1,300 fanegas of grain he had sown.[19]

And when the rains came they brought no relief, only further disaster. All over Andalucía hungry peasants flocked to the towns in these years. The relief services provided by civil and ecclesiastical bodies broke down under the strain, powerless to prevent heavy mortality. Famine was a killer in itself. But its secondary effects were equally monstrous. Widespread malnutrition made the population easy prey to epidemic disease. And in a cruel coincidence pestilence now penetrated these debilitated regions.

The second half of the seventeenth century seems to have seen a reversal of the downward demographic trend, but there was a short-term recession in Castile in the 1680's, caused by the epidemics of 1676–85 which, while not as vicious as their predecessors, were more prolonged. The plague began in Cartagena in June 1676, imported perhaps from the eastern Mediterranean.[20]

[18] Quoted by Domínguez Ortiz, 'La crisis de Castilla en 1677–1687', *op. cit.*, p. 439.
[19] Quoted *ibid.*, p. 440, n. 14.
[20] Domínguez Ortiz, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII*, pp. 75–81.

Quarantine measures were ineffective and the infection swept through Murcia, then eastwards along the coast to Andalucía. Málaga was badly hit. Antequera reported the loss of 12,000 inhabitants. Many villages lost half their inhabitants. The disease fed particularly on eastern Andalucía. From 1679 to 1681 Granada suffered grievously, and almost simultaneously Jaén, Córdoba and Seville were infected. In Seville a preacher promised immunity if the theatres were closed; the advice was sound enough on quarantine grounds and it was observed, but by then the infection had taken root. The poor harvests of 1682–83 enabled the epidemic to flare up again in a second wave which lasted from 1683 to 1686. While it revived in Andalucía, it now also penetrated parts of La Mancha and Extremadura. Terror struck the court when it reached Castile and approached Madrid itself; there were heavy losses in the provinces of Burgos, Toledo, Madrid and Valladolid. Total mortality between 1677 and 1686 amounted perhaps to 250,000.[21] So there was no real demographic recovery for Castile in the second half of the seventeenth century. In 1665 the kingdom had slightly over 5 million inhabitants; it had no more than this at the beginning of the following century. The setbacks occurred in 1677–86 when climate, crops and contagion all worked against the people of Castile and decimated their ranks once more. The economy also suffered. Trade was damaged by quarantine measures, which disrupted communications without preventing contagion; the revenue from taxes diminished; and labour shortage affected agriculture and other sectors of the economy.

On top of these natural calamities Castile experienced its worst monetary crisis of the century. Monetary disorder was more than a symptom of an ailing economy: it exacerbated as well as reflected depression. The basic object of monetary inflation was to bridge the gap between falling revenue and rising expenditure and to make good the failure of the economy to yield more wealth. Ironically the best industrial machinery in Spain was the mint at Segovia, installed by German technicians. Here and at other minting centres Philip IV had practised coinage debasement with reckless abandon. Inevitably gold and silver were driven out of circulation, and from the 1660's to the 1680's vellon may have constituted at least 95 per cent. of money spent in Castile. Government inertia in the first fifteen years of Charles II's reign allowed the problem to drift without solution. The premium on silver, the measure of public distrust of vellon, having fallen to 50 per cent. following Philip IV's violent deflation of 1664, rose to 115·5 per cent. in New Castile by mid-1665, to 175 per cent. by 1670, and to 275 per cent. by 1680.[22] Com-

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 113.
[22] Hamilton, *War and Prices in Spain 1651–1800*, pp. 9–35.

modity prices in New Castile rose from an index of 69 in 1662 to 98 in 1670.[23] The following decade saw inflation at its peak, with the index moving from 96 in 1671 to 113 in 1679. In New Castile the price of wheat almost doubled between 1676 and 1678. This great price rise was conditioned to some degree by mutations in the coinage, the price curve almost coinciding with monetary inflation. In the case of agricultural prices, which reached their highest point in 1678, it was also aggravated by climatic conditions and crop failures from 1677, especially in Andalucía. According to the French ambassador, the marquis of Villars, on the basis of his experience in 1679–81, prices in Madrid were twice as high as the most expensive city in Europe.[24]

The cycle of inflation–deflation–inflation, the monetary and economic chaos, made life intolerable for Spaniards, destroying their savings and disrupting their trade. The ratio of wages to prices appears to have been favourable to wage-earners, and nominally they may have had sufficient for the necessities of life;[25] but the monetary disorder prevents serious estimate of the real value of wages; and in any case the continual depreciation of vellon, the only currency available to the poorer classes, eroded their earnings, while heavy taxation further reduced their actual income. Commerce was dislocated and Spanish merchants had real difficulty in conducting overseas transactions; and inflation was too rampant to be a stimulus to the economy.

Eventually the government of Charles II shed its lethargy. In response to public clamour for deflation, a decree of 10 February 1680 reduced the tariff of the 'rich vellon' struck under the ordinance of October 1660 by 50 per cent.; that of imitation vellon was reduced by three-fourths; and coins counterfeited abroad were cut by seven-eighths of their denominational value.[26] The law of 1641 limiting the premium to 50 per cent., which had been inoperative for 40 years, was reaffirmed. The premium now actually fell from 275 to 50 per cent. when the deflation took place and remained there for more than six years. By decree of 22 May 1680 the 'rich vellon' was demonetised, and the owners were paid its value in 'current money'. Pure copper vellon with extrinsic value slightly above its intrinsic worth was authorised. There were no further changes in the vellon coinage during the Habsburg period; the output of vellon was rigidly limited, if only through inability to secure copper; and no more sudden doses of inflation and deflation perturbed economic life.

The severe deflationary measures of 1680, necessary as they may have been in the long term, were excruciating in their immediate effects. The object was

[23] Base 1671–80; see Hamilton, *War and Prices in Spain* 1651–1800, pp. 119, 121, 240.
[24] Marquis de Villars, *Mémoires de la cour d'Espagne*, 1678–1682 (London, 1861), p. 3.
[25] Hamilton, *War and Prices in Spain* 1651–1800, p. 219.
[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 20–21.

to entice gold and silver into circulation. It was also sought to bring down prices, which had become intolerably high for all those with fixed incomes. They were therefore accompanied by further decrees, notably that of 27 November 1680, fixing prices at an artificially low level. The combination of deflation and price-control produced a price collapse unparalleled in Spanish history: commodity prices fell by almost 50 per cent. in two years. Everyone suffered, from the beggar to the king. Shortage of money paralysed almost every sector of the economy. The government tried in vain to augment the amount of money in circulation by coining American silver when it arrived, by purchasing silver objects for minting, and by prohibiting the manufacture of articles from copper needed for vellon. But artisans, peasants and landowners continued to complain bitterly of the absolute lack of money and the minimal prices obtained for their products. Towns and villages could not pay their taxes, and the government was forced to condone arrears, especially in central Castile. In October 1681 the Council of Finance discussed the possibility of suspending all taxes created since 1656, lowering the municipal *sisa*, and making a new assessment of alcabala quotas, because communities simply could not pay the present level.[27]

The poor prices of agricultural products affected the whole Castilian economy, and the repercussions were felt in trade and industry. The calling in of old coin under the decrees of 1680 led in many parts of the country to a virtual stoppage of local trade, and some parts of Castile fell back on barter for lack of good currency. Merchants were unable to meet their liabilities or collect money owed to them. Administrators and lessees of public money, who had only old coinage in their possession, were left insolvent. The credit of financiers collapsed, and bankers lost half their capital through devaluation. Overseas trade was also affected. According to the French ambassador, 'The wool trade of Segovia, almost the only trade from which Spaniards still make a profit, slumped heavily as a result of devaluation, which caused the price of wool to double. Foreigners would no longer buy it unless the Spaniards would reduce its price proportionately'.[28] Altogether the years 1680–82 were tragic ones for Spain, among the most demoralising ever experienced by its people. And the agony continued.

Committees of inquiry sat in continuous session, but solutions were difficult to find. In November 1683 the government admitted that shortage of money was damaging trade and revenue as well as the income of the church and private landowners, and the Council of Castile was asked to propose a remedy. The Council could not agree on policy and gave an assortment of

[27] Domínguez Ortiz, 'La crisis de Castilla en 1677–1687', *op. cit.*, p. 449.
[28] Villars, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

advice, none of it very convincing. The news reaching Madrid from the south of Spain in 1684 could hardly have been worse. In reply to a demand for greater tax efforts came a series of reports containing only lamentations. Córdoba, for example, insisted on its utter ruin:

> Great privation is suffered in this city and province. The flight of people from the countryside has filled the town with so many beggars that they have to be fed out of common stocks. But food is in short supply. The diminution of the harvests, the dearth of cattle, the destitution of labourers, the great bankruptcy of ecclesiastical and secular incomes, has left the greater part of the countryside uncultivated, and this is the only wealth of the province. So labourers are without work, owners without income; commerce is halted by lack of currency and by the export of money to buy grain from abroad. . . . And to crown all the plague continues for its seventh year.[29]

Although Andalucía headed the list of distressed areas, New Castile was not far behind. In the course of 1684 the Council of Finance received numerous petitions from communities requesting a reduction of their tax quota on the grounds of depopulation, shortage of money, and poor prices. Many villages complained that their population had fallen steeply since 1680, one from 1,286 to 792, another from 500 to 158, others from 400 to 200, and from 200 to 80. And invariably the reason given was the low price of agricultural products since the savage deflation of 1680. A report of a minister of the Council of Castile in 1685 summed up the situation:

> The state of the whole kingdom of Castile is utterly wretched, especially Andalucía, where the aristocracy are without funds, the middle elements poverty-stricken, artisans reduced to vagrancy or beggary, and many dying of hunger, buried by the Brothers of Charity who used to give them relief but now have nothing to give. The women are also suffering. Necessity forces them to beg from door to door, for work does not yield a sustenance; others never leave the house, even to go to Mass, so destitute are they; and others—the worse pity—have prostituted themselves at all ages, simply to eat.[30]

One of the objects of the great deflation of 1680 was to bring gold and silver into circulation. In 1686 the government effected a partial revaluing of silver, a measure which had been demanded for some time as an economic stimulus and a means of preventing the flight of specie abroad.[31] By decree of

[29] Quoted by Domínguez Ortiz, 'La crisis de Castilla en 1677–1687', *op. cit.*, p. 449.
[30] Quoted by Maura, *Vida y reinado de Carlos II*, i, 396.
[31] Hamilton, *War and Prices in Spain* 1651–1800, pp. 22–23, 31.

...ember the silver coinage was devalued by approximately 20 per cent. ...remium on the new issue in terms of vellon was fixed at 50 per cent., ... the old at 87·5 per cent. And they remained fairly constant at this ... the rest of the century. This devaluation of silver, the first in two ..., was in effect an inflationary measure, but a sound and justified one. ... an end to a long period of monetary instability; silver came out of its ... places and began to enter the market again; prices ceased to fall and ...went modest recovery; and the government helped things along by ... some tax relief. Even the weather improved, so that for a number of ... harvests were more abundant. And the country was spared major ...nics for the rest of the century. The patient did not undergo a miracu- ...covery. Periodic hunger and privation continued to visit the Castilian ..., and the Council of Finance was obliged to give further tax relief to ...ous towns and villages unable to meet their quotas. But from 1687 the ... features of depression began to lift and Castile turned its back on the ... decade.

...s the recovery of Castile merely an attenuation of the adversities of ...87, or was it an absolute revival, the basis of eighteenth-century ...lopment?[32] After 1686 the country enjoyed fourteen years of monetary ...lity, and Habsburg government bequeathed to its successor at least a ...d currency. There was also a slow and modest rise in prices. The severe ...tion of 1680 had brought commodity prices in New Castile down from ...dex of 113·4 in 1679 to 57·7 in 1686. In the subsequent period prices ...ained weak but showed a tendency to improve. In New Castile they ... from an index of 57·9 in 1687 to 67·1 in 1699; in Old Castile from 57·4 ...; in Andalucía from 60 to 63·7.[33] This stabilisation of prices lasted from ...mid-1680's to the 1730's, to be followed by a stronger rise, especially in ...second half of the eighteenth century. In prices as in currency therefore ... was no abrupt break in 1700. The trough of Spain's great depression ... be limited to the period 1640–85, and its greatest depth to the years ...–85. The savage devaluation of 1680, the child and father of crisis, ...tually restored confidence in Spanish currency, which in turn gave ...uragement to financiers and manufacturers. And the slow and dependable ... rise after 1686, if not a generator of growth, was at least a sign that the ... depression had now spent itself; and the economy began to respond to ...derate inflation. Perhaps the last decade of Habsburg rule was less disas- ... for Spain than is often supposed.

[32] For varying interpretations see the two studies cited in n. 16 and Pierre Vilar, 'Histoire des ... histoire générale', *Annales*, iv (1949), 29–45, especially p. 40.
[33] Hamilton, *War and Prices in Spain* 1651–1800, pp. 119, 136.

3. Bureaucracy and its Reform

While the later government of Charles II was restoring confidence to Spain's monetary system, it was also taking the first steps in administrative reform, anticipating in some degree the more successful efforts of Bourbon reformers in the following century. The problem was clear enough. National revival was impeded by defective institutions. The bureaucracy, which had once been the strength of Spanish government, was now failing the country. In view of the vested interests involved, however, it was an achievement to get the matter on to a government agenda.

Spain had too many officials. Pursuit of office had become a mania, fed by the universities, current social values, the patronage system, and the government's own improvidence. The universities of Salamanca, Valladolid and Alcalá, among others, produced each year hordes of law graduates. Many of these had procured a virtually free education through entry in the Colegios Mayores, now a monopoly of the aristocracy; and many of them were sons and relatives of existing officials. With a university degree a man was almost guaranteed appointment in the law courts, the *audiencias* and the chancelleries, and from these he could expect promotion in due course to one of the councils. The close connection between university entrance and bureaucratic appointment tended to create a closed circle of administrators who monopolised public careers. For those who did not have a degree but possessed compensatory qualifications—aristocratic status or family relationship with officials—there was another means of entry into the bureaucracy, by way of offices known as *de capa y espada*. These appointments depended solely on royal favour and patronage; there was no limitation as to their number; no standards or formal qualifications were required; and the salaries of these additional officials were an excessive charge on government revenue. Appointments of this kind so greatly exceeded the needs of the councils that periodic attempts had been made to control them; in 1661, for example, Philip IV decreed that *capa y espada* councillors appointed to the *Junta de Guerra* should wait for a vacancy before joining it, though they could receive salaries from the date of nomination.

Bureaucratic growth was both superfluous and harmful. In the Council of the Indies no less than 72 councillors were appointed in the 35 years of Charles II's reign. Of these 24 were appointments *de capa y espada*. A total of 48 were *consejeros togados* (legally qualified councillors); of these 23 died in office, 13 of them after serving only a short term, while 19 were quickly promoted to the Council of Castile. This lack of continuity in service was a serious obstacle to efficient administration: in the course of 35 years only 10 councillors served

for more than 10 years on the Council of the Indies.[34] But there were further anomalies. One of these, of recent growth, was the habit of appointing supernumerary councillors, both *togados* and *de capa y espada*, who already held appointments elsewhere, frequently abroad. The sole object of this exercise was to augment salaries. Don Pedro Ronquillo, for example, while holding appointment in the Netherlands and then as ambassador in London, was appointed councillor of the Indies (and also of Castile), without ever setting foot inside the council chamber.[35] And former secretaries of the Council of State were sometimes appointed to the Council of the Indies simply as a form of pension on retirement.

Finally, there was a further entry to office, through purchase. This was regarded as patriotism, not corruption, and the office so bought became a piece of property, usually with right of renunciation, which meant that the owner could sell it, bequeath it, or give it away. Sale of office extended not only to notarial and municipal office, both very large groups, but to salaried offices in the central administration, including legal offices which were strictly speaking unsaleable. By the end of Philip IV's reign senior administrative posts of a judicial and financial kind, whose sale was generally regarded as inappropriate, were being put up to purchasers almost as a matter of routine.[36] The system embodied two abuses: it placed people in posts of responsibility for which they were morally or intellectually unfitted; and it encouraged peculation, as successful candidates had to pay off the interest on capital borrowed to purchase the office. In the reign of Charles II abuses multiplied. Now even conciliar appointments were sold. At least two *capa y espada* councillors of the Indies, both high-ranking aristocrats, the duke of Guastala and the marquis of Iscar, obtained their appointments through payment of a substantial *servicio*. And although all purchase of legal office was forbidden in law, Martín de Solis was appointed fiscal of the Council of the Indies on payment of 14,500 ducats. Towards the end of the reign a child of nine years, the marquis of La Laguna, count of Paredes, inherited his father's office in the Council of the Indies along with other items of property.

Subordinate officials multiplied even more rapidly. In 1690 the Council of the Indies alone had 75 salaried officials. Its total strength of 100 included 50 supernumerary officials on salary in all grades from councillor to porter. This expansion occurred not in response to increase of business but to demands of patronage. Surplus staff were a great financial liability, and wages were usually in arrears, by August 1668 164,453 ducats in arrears. This may not

[34] Schäfer, *El Consejo real y supremo de las Indias*, i, 269.
[35] *Ibid.*, i, 269–70.
[36] Parry, *The Sale of Public Office in the Spanish Indies under the Habsburgs*, pp. 5, 48.

have been serious for aristocratic supernumeraries, but it meant that lower officials lived constantly on credit or corruption. Apart from salaries—and pensions for widows—council officials also received a number of bonuses and fringe benefits, all of which were an additional burden for the council's financial allocation, at a time when its quota of remittances from Peru was becoming more and more irregular. So the financial position of the Council of the Indies was worse in the reign of Charles II than in any previous period. And this was one council alone. The others had similar problems of personnel and finance.

As the bureaucracy became a form of social security for its own members, so it deteriorated as an instrument of government. Its methods called for drastic overhaul. The *consulta*, originally a useful means of summarising subjects and opinions, degenerated into a long-winded and pointless exercise. The practice of recording the opinion and arguments of each individual councillor was rigidly followed even when these were unanimous or in substantial agreement. There was, moreover, a certain chicanery in the construction of *consultas*. By the mid-seventeenth century councillors had adopted the practice of leaving the council table after debate, recording their opinions in private, and then either incorporating them in a completed *consulta* or sending them direct to the king outside conciliar channels. Repeated prohibition of this practice in the 1650's and 1660's suggests that it was difficult to eradicate.[37] Further attempts to reform *consulta* procedure were made in the reign of Charles II, though without much success.[38]

At a certain level conciliar government could function with some efficiency; the receipt of reports by individual councils, and the transmission of outgoing replies and instructions, these tasks were performed well enough. But between these two stages, when the sovereign or his minister had to receive, consider and resolve material from a large number of councils, lay the weak link in the whole system and the point where it frequently broke down. Apart from the accumulation of business, the government did not possess an efficient registry; this meant that neither the councils nor the executive could lay their hands quickly on papers relevant to the file under discussion. The state archives at Simancas, outside Valladolid, were remote from the central organs of government; great delay could ensue if it were necessary to call for previous papers, especially as the filing system at Simancas was somewhat primitive.[39] Philip IV had attempted to remedy this situation. He ordered the creation within the royal palace of a current registry modelled on the permanent archives at Simancas. Here all conciliar

[37] Valiente, *Los validos en la monarquía española del siglo XVII*, pp. 201–2.
[38] See 'Orden de la Reina Gobernadora', 26 July 1672, *ibid.*, pp. 209–10.
[39] See the complaints of Philip IV, *ibid.*, pp. 199–200.

papers would be filed for orderly consultation; material four years old would be removed and deposited in Simancas, but a classified inventory of their contents would be kept in the registry.

This large family of councils and their numerous offspring, the juntas, squabbled incessantly over jurisdiction. Overlapping areas of competence were a fertile source of dissension and kept the councils in permanent agitation, so that many of their *consultas* were concerned not with policy but with their own authority and alleged encroachment by other councils. Material which had come to a council, been processed into a *consulta* and remitted to the sovereign for decision, frequently had to be sent for execution to other interested councils, including the Council of State with its universal brief. These councils would then wish to see the original *consulta* from the first council, and if they disagreed with its contents they would start all over again, with new deliberations and new *consultas*. Philip IV on more than one occasion ordered this nonsense to stop. But relations among councils and cross-reference between their *consultas* continued to cripple conciliar government, causing endless paper work and retarding executive action.[40]

The only hope of success under this system lay in the quality of the executive. A strong minister could override or by-pass the councils in order to speed decisions and action. This was the crucial argument in favour of a prime minister, whether or not he was a *valido*. But the single executive which emerged in the seventeenth century, culminating in straightforward prime ministers under Charles II, depended on two further innovations to operate effectively. Prime ministers needed to consult frequently with other ministers without going through the cumbersome machinery of the councils; and the executive needed an efficient secretariat of its own independent of the conciliar secretaries. In the eighteenth century the Bourbons worked their way towards a kind of cabinet council, consisting of the king or first minister and a few ministerial colleagues. The idea at least had been anticipated. There were signs, obscure at the end of Philip IV's reign, more clear during the reign of Charles II, that government was moving towards this kind of extraconciliar consultation. Prime ministers and their colleagues, the presidents of councils, assembled together with some regularity and acquired a secretariat of their own. This was the *Secretaría del Despacho Universal*, which emerged from the secretariat of the Council of State but seems to have detached itself from it. The *Secretario del Despacho* was not confined to a specific area of foreign affairs, as were the two secretaries of the Council of State, but had a universal brief and combined the functions of consultant and secretary to the head of government, whether this was a Junta de Gobierno or

[40] *Ibid.*, pp. 162, 196–98, 205–6.

later a prime minister. The holders of the office were men of some status and distinction, Blasco de Loyola, Pedro Fernández del Campo, Jerónimo de Eguía, José de Veitia Linaje, Manuel de Lira. The stature of the office made it an object of great competition, and accounts for the surprise evinced by the appointment of unworthy incumbents in the 1690's.

In the reign of Charles II these developments were limited by the mediocrity of the crown and the power of the grandees. Until the political power of the nobles had been broken by a powerful crown, absolute in practice as well as in theory and capable of choosing its prime minister irrespective of whether he were a grandee, then the executive could never completely bypass the aristocratic councils or fully control the administration. One attempt was made to provide an alternative to conciliar administration. In 1687 the count of Oropesa created a new office, the *Superintendencia de Hacienda*, designed as a single executive over financial affairs. This was inspired by French practice and was a curious precursor of eighteenth-century developments. But the functions of the office and its relation with the Council of Finance were never closely defined.[41]

The government of Charles II, therefore, had to accept the existence of councils and try to improve them. It made three attempts at reform. The first came in 1677 and its object, as defined by the royal decree of 6 July, was 'to obviate the great delay in the efficient dispatch of business caused by the increased number of ministers, as well as the rising cost of salaries'. The details are known only for the Council of the Indies, but similar provisions seem to have been made for the other councils. The personnel of the Council and of the Cámara de Indias was limited to a president, eight councillors, a fiscal, two secretaries, and eight minor officials; and it was insisted that the councillors should have had experience of service in the colonies.[42] Yet this admirable reform was virtually annulled by its final provision: it was conceded that no present incumbent would be retired, and that the Council would be reduced to its new size simply by not filling vacancies when they occurred. In view of the great numbers involved this would take a long time. As long as government was conceived in terms of grace, favour and patronage, there was little chance of basic reform. This decree had little effect, and the old abuses continued.

Under the inspiration of Oropesa the government returned to the problem in 1687. A decree of 31 January ordered the total suppression of purchased offices in the councils, leaving to the proprietors only the title and status and 5 per cent. interest on the sum paid for the office. The decree also suppressed

[41] See above, pp. 271–2.
[42] Schäfer, *op. cit.*, i, 275–76.

supernumerary places acquired by grace and favour when they became vacant, and stated that on no account were there to be supernumerary offices in the future.[43] This was a limited measure, but it seems to have been more effective in practice than that of 1677.

The major reform was that of 1691. This too was prepared by Oropesa, though his dismissal prevented him from implementing it personally. By decree of 17 July membership of the councils was reduced in the interests of efficiency and economy. In the case of the Council of the Indies this meant a strength of one president, 8 councillors *togados*, 2 *de capa y espada*, 2 secretaries and a fiscal, and 9 minor officials. These were to continue to receive the customary salaries, but the numerous bonuses were reduced. All councillors over and above this number were to be retired, though they would remain on half salary with an option on vacancies when they occurred.[44] As a general measure the decree annulled all *mercedes* and grants made by the administration itself without royal cognisance. Similar decrees were issued for the other councils, and the whole can be regarded as an important announcement of administrative reform. But statements of good intentions were not enough, and the test came in the execution. These measures did not solve the financial problems of the councils or make good the arrears of salary. In 1694, it is true, the Council of Finance became the sole administrator of taxes in Castile, another anticipation of eighteenth-century rationalisation, but it was not given financial control over the bureaucracy. So each supreme council continued to have its own financial apparatus and its own income, and they were not controlled and paid by the treasury. Moreover, to accommodate clients, exceptions were immediately made—in two cases were written into the decree itself—allowing additional councillors *de capa y espada*. Finally, the execution of the decree was seriously handicapped by the collapse of government after the departure of Oropesa, though it might be added that early Bourbon government found it just as difficult to implement bureaucratic reform. For all these reasons the situation drifted back to normal. When in 1700 the Habsburg regime came to an end, the councillors of the Indies, whose number had been fixed at 10 by the decree of 1691, had grown to 19, 7 of them *de capa y espada*; and substantial portions of salaries were five years in arrears.[45]

[43] *Ibid.*, i, 278.
[44] *Ibid.*, i, 279–85.
[45] Nevertheless the Council of the Indies managed to produce in 1681, 78 years after the project was initiated, the *Recopilación de Leyes de las Indias*, a compilation of 6,400 laws in four folio volumes, 'a notable monument of colonial legislation'; see Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America*, p. 102.

4. The Precursors

The years around 1680 were critical ones for Spain. It was then that the great depression of the seventeenth century, at its most acute from 1640, reached the most savage intensity. Yet the blackest period yielded the first glimmers of enlightenment. After the corruption and improvisation of the last *validos* and the first *caudillo*, the country was given political sanity and stability under the premierships of Medinaceli and Oropesa, an advance which was only halted by the intervention of the succession problem. Catalonia began to emerge from its provincialism, to renew its economy, and to raise its sights towards the outer world. On the basis of monetary soundness and moderate inflation, Castile laid the foundations for future economic recovery. And a programme of administrative reform was initiated, which promised more than it fulfilled, it is true, but which was subsequently imitated by the first Bourbon. The evidence, fragmentary though it is, justifies perhaps the projection of a new framework for modern Spanish history. For if this hypothesis is correct the chronology of depression must be revised. Spain did not pass suddenly from obscurantism to enlightenment in 1700 with the death of the last decrepit Habsburg and the advent of the first reforming Bourbon. If the performance of later Habsburg government was superior to its actual resources, that of the early Bourbons fell short of expectations. An alternative chronology, therefore, would postulate a period from 1680 to about 1760, in which successive governments arrested, if they did not reverse, the downward trend; this was followed, from 1760 to about 1790, by a programme of more vigorous reform which modernised Spain's government and strengthened its economy.[46]

In Castile ministers attempted to build upon the monetary reform of the early 1680's by putting the government's own finances in order. During the first half of the reign these continued in their pristine chaos. There were too many taxes, too many officials and tax farmers, and too little actual yield; income was further eroded by exemption and fraud, by the cost of collection, and by inflation.[47] The government survived by assigning taxes and other forms of revenue years in advance to bankers and creditors in return for immediate cash, and by borrowing from financiers and individuals on the security of *juros*. The latter became a dead weight of permanent obligation. Heavy liability had been inherited from the previous reign, for on 15 November 1663 Philip IV had declared his final bankruptcy and converted his debts into *juros*. A *juro* was a contract whereby a person or institution in return for an advance of capital to the crown, either voluntary or forced, was

[46] There are, of course, further refinements of chronology in the period 1700–1808.
[47] See above, pp. 255–72.

given an annual pension charged on a specific revenue.[48] This then became a piece of property which could be inherited or traded. The owners were hospitals, monasteries, widows, minors, *caballeros*, townspeople, all those people unable or unwilling to engage in work or business. But under Philip IV many merchants and businessmen were forced to buy *juros*, or received them in payment for sequestered capital.[49] Influential people such as bankers and *asentistas* speculated in these instruments, buying up depreciated *juros* and then persuading the treasury to pay the full income on them. Already by the reign of Philip III *juros* represented the massive sum of 4·5 million ducats, almost half the total revenue of the crown, and they were charged on the most lucrative and secure revenues. By 1667 they amounted to 9 million ducats and had become the treasury's biggest liability. The superintendent of finance, the marquis of los Vélez, reported on 10 May 1687:

> For all the great machine of this monarchy there remains to your Majesty no more than the revenue contributed by the provinces of Castile, whose value comes to 84,197,790 *vellon reales*: what is alienated and destined for *juros* comes to 122,971,550 reales, leaving a deficit of 41,578,230 reales.[50]

A substantial part of the revenue raised from *juros* was assigned to defence expenditure. This continued to be the biggest drain on government resources. In 1680 projected expenditure amounted to 19·5 million escudos, available revenue to 8·7 million; deficit for the year, 10·8 million.[51] As silver was the only Spanish currency acceptable abroad, the crown had to use its bullion on foreign payments while trying to live on vellon at home, the currency in which its taxes were also collected. The premium on silver rose to 190 per cent. in 1675, and to 275 per cent. in 1680. To send 1 million ducats to the Low Countries cost 2,750,000 ducats.[52] And by this time silver was a scarce commodity, for the treasure from America was much diminished. The entire sum remitted to the crown from Mexico in the period 1663–1700 amounted to no more than 13·5 million pesos; and between 1651 and 1739 only 36·9 million pesos came from Peru.[53]

From 1683 to 1685 the government initiated discussion of reform of the tax structure. In 1686 the *junta de medios* of the Council of Castile lent its

[48] Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 315–29.
[49] Although it is convenient to call *juros* government bonds, they were not bonds in the modern sense, for they were backed only by specific items of public revenue, not the whole.
[50] Quoted by Kamen, 'The Decline of Castile: the last crisis', *op. cit.*, p. 65.
[51] *Ibid.*, p. 66.
[52] Domínguez Ortiz, 'La crisis de Castilla en 1677–1687', *op. cit.*, p. 443.
[53] Haring, *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies in the Time of the Hapsburgs*, p. 167, n. 2; Rodríguez Vicente, 'Los caudales remitidos desde el Perú a España por cuenta de la Real Hacienda. Serie estadísticas (1651–1739)', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, xxi (1964), 1–24.

support to the view that the incidence of taxation should be shifted from the lower to the upper income groups. It proposed that the *millones*, a tax on vital articles of food, should be reduced, while the *alcabala* and other taxes which fell more heavily on the affluent should be increased. The point was taken up in 1687 by the marquis of los Vélez, the newly appointed superintendent of finance, who produced an extensive memorandum on financial reform.[54] According to this, revenue was falling to 7–9 million ducats, while expenditure was rising to 10–11 million. The drop corresponded to the *millones*, which had originally been introduced as a tax on basic articles of consumption as an alternative to direct taxation of the privileged classes, the nobles and the clergy. The yield of the *millones* was gradually eroded by the excessive bureaucracy it attracted, by the charging of *juro* payments upon it, and by the frauds committed by nobles and clergy, who sold taxcharged articles from their own estates direct to the consumer and kept the tax for themselves. Vélez concluded that 'the *millones* is the most unjust and burdensome tax in the kingdom', as it fell primarily on the poor, benefited the rich not the treasury, and now yielded no more than 1·5 million ducats.

Although the majority of ministers agreed that the *millones* should be abolished and replaced perhaps by a direct tax, they feared the sudden loss of 1½ million ducats without a secure replacement. So the crown appointed another committee of the Council of Castile, headed by the superintendent of finance, to examine the financial situation in general and the proposal to reduce the *millones* in particular. And meanwhile an attempt was made to purge the tax of its administrative abuses and to charge it on the clergy. Strictly speaking the clergy were not exempt from the *millones*, but they resented it and took refuge in the periodic papal sanction which was required. On this occasion, with the excuse that papal permission had not yet arrived, the archbishop of Toledo, Cardinal Portocarrero, refused to allow the tax in his diocese and threatened the tax-collectors with excommunication. He remained adamant in spite of the pleas of Oropesa, the royal confessor, and Charles II himself. So the idea was dropped, and another reform was blocked by vested interest. Then, in February 1688, the Vélez committee reported; it concluded that while it was vital to alleviate the tax burden, the *millones* must be maintained, as it was needed for defence expenditure. It might have added that it was also a substitute for direct taxation of the privileged classes.

Frustrated in major reform by the rigid social structure of Castile, the Oropesa administration did what it could to adjust the fiscal system. It attempted to cut expenditure, and in fact reduced the budget for the royal household to 1·5 million ducats, a level little higher than that of seventy

[54] Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 446–47.

years previously. Offices were pruned, including those purchased, and those that survived were subject to a forced loan equal to a *media anata*.[55] There was a determined attack on pensions and *mercedes*: some were stopped, others were cut, and all were taxed, the only exceptions being those of service veterans and their widows, and the widows of ministers, though even these were taxed. While none of this added up to a complete programme, it was evidence of reform within the existing structure. And reform went beyond mere fiscal pressure. Not only did Oropesa and los Vélez try to tap the rich, they also sought to alleviate the poor. This can be seen in the removal of abuses attached to the *millones*, in the abolition or reduction of the *sisa* on a number of consumer goods, and in the lowering of the tax quota for communities who were particularly hard pressed. And they extended the hand of reform to the church, negotiating with Rome for increased revenue from the clergy, and initiating a campaign against the excessive number of clerics and false vocations.

Meanwhile, in response to mounting criticism from reformers and taxpayers, the government had launched a major campaign against *juros*. The crown had already added to the heavy *juro* liability inherited from its predecessor, particularly from 1672 when this device was used to finance defence expenditure against France. *Juros* of course had not been allowed to escape completely: in classical seventeenth-century manner, what weak governments had been unable to prevent they had taxed, by means of a *media anata*, equivalent to the first half-year's income from each *juro*. But from 1677 the government began a basic reform of *juro* finance, and attempted to divide its revenue fairly between past and present claimants.[56] In this year a distinction was made between (1) *juros antiguos* acquired before 1635, and (2) *juros modernos* acquired since then. The state annulled half the value of the first type, and charged a *media anata* and a tax of 5 per cent. on what remained. The second type, which had attracted greater speculation, were also annulled to half their value, and the remainder were charged a *media anata* and taxed at 15 per cent. Subsequent decrees of 1685 and 1687 reduced the exemptions allowed under the 1677 enactment, and further annulled *juros* by 50–75 per cent., restricting interest payments to 4 per cent. From the 1685 operation alone the state saved 4 million ducats. By a further decree of 1688 the government drew up a list of priorities on revenue, reserving an annual portion for state expenditure, and applying the balance in specific proportions to servicing debts, and paying *juros*, salaries and pensions. The attack on *juros* between

[55] *Ibid.*, i, 508.

[56] Alvaro Castillo Pintado, 'Los juros de Castilla. Apogeo y fin de un instrumento de crédito', *Hispania*, xxiii (1963), 43–70, especially pp., 64–66; Maura, *op. cit.*, i, 508; Domínguez Ortiz, *Política y hacienda de Felipe IV*, pp. 328–29.

1677 and 1687 was part of the government's reaction to the great crisis which engulfed Castile in those years. Like the draconian monetary policy of 1680, the liquidation of *juros* caused great suffering in the short term, as individuals and institutions suddenly found their annuities annulled or devalued, and commercial houses involved in *juro* business lost some of their assets. But the new policy ended speculation in these instruments, penalised non-productive activities, and anticipated the final liquidation of the *juro* debt in 1727. As such it was a measure of long-term recovery.

The reforming aspirations of Charles II's ministers did not stop at public finance. They also tried to penetrate more deeply into Spain's industrial and commercial problems. In these sectors their efforts were piecemeal and confused, and they were overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task. They are evidence of promise rather than performance, of partiality to the idea that the state should play a more positive role in economic planning; and they foreshadowed more successful action by later governments. A law of 1679 sought to improve the status and conditions of factory owners by granting them, among other things, the right to import raw materials duty-free and reducing their liabilities for *alcabala*. Laws of 1682 and 1692 made it clear that industrial and entrepreneurial activities were legally compatible with nobility.[57] And by decree of 29 January the government set up a *Junta General de Comercio*. This consisted of ministers and experts, and was designed to deal with problems of depopulation and industrial depression; and it was instructed to found *montes de piedad*, or credit banks, to facilitate movement of capital. Great hopes were placed in the Junta, but they were not fulfilled. It received only intermittent support from the government, was starved of resources and periodically dissolved. The almost complete lack of evidence of its activities raises suspicion about their existence. But the Bourbons regarded it as a useful enough institution, for it was revived by Philip V in 1705. One of its purposes was to create factories, but little came of this. The few attempts at industrial revival in this period were made by foreigners, tempted into Spain by the country's underdevelopment and acting essentially on their own initiative, though with government backing. A law of 1679 encouraged the immigration of foreign craftsmen into Spain. In 1679 Flemish workers founded a paper mill at Arco in Segovia; a number of foreigners started new silk factories in Madrid and woollen factories in Cuenca; and in 1687 Frenchmen established a cloth factory in Sigüenza.[58] In the last decades of the century four stocking factories were established in Madrid and three in Valencia, with some export to England. Cloth was manufactured at Toledo and

[57] *Novísima Recopilación de las Leyes de España* (6 vols., Madrid, 1805–1807), V, xii, 2; VIII, xxiv, 1.

[58] Kamen, 'The Decline of Castile: the last crisis', *op. cit.*, pp. 68–69.

Segovia as well as at Cuenca and Sigüenza, but the product was coarse and had no market beyond the poorest classes. The silk factories of Valencia, Granada and Andalucía were still productive, though again the product was not of high quality.[59] Those at Valencia seem to have been profitable as well as productive, and before the War of Succession employed some 800 workers.[60] But none of this activity was sufficient to overcome the deep depression in the Spanish textile industry. Spain still remained unattractive to the best foreign experts. In 1677 the government tried to secure Dutch and English textile experts to revive the industry; but apparently they imposed conditions which the Spanish authorities found unacceptable.[61]

Commerce was almost as intractable as industry. In the eighteenth century, more particularly under Charles III, the government undertook a vast programme of commercial and colonial reform designed to appropriate the fruits of empire for its owner. In the late seventeenth century projects of this kind never left the council table, though at least they were extensively debated and the ideas canvassed are not without interest. Interested parties advanced a number of projects for chartered companies on the model of the English and Dutch East India Companies, some of them providing for the retention of the fleet system but with the administration of colonial trade and navigation focused in a single private corporation.[62] In 1683 the *Junta de Comercio* was reconstituted and initiated discussion of various reforms. One of the subjects under debate was a company for American trade, first proposed by Narciso Feliu, This envisaged a chartered 'armed company for the trade with the Indies', as a means of reviving Spanish manufactures and destroying foreign contraband in America; it would be modelled on English and Dutch companies, and foreigners might be admitted.[63] The Junta accepted the proposal and advised the government to give its sanction, which it apparently did, though the company was never actually created. For about a decade after 1687 the Council of the Indies considered a proposal for a company in the Netherlands, to be granted the sole right to trade to Hispaniola and Puerto Rico; it would be open to all Spanish subjects and even to capitalists of other friendly nations. Again, although the Council of the Indies seemed to favour the proposal, there was no outcome.

[59] N. Barozzi and G. Berchet, *Relazioni degli stati europei*. Ser. 1, *Spagna* (Venice, 1660), ii, 642–45; this is, however, an overrated source, containing inaccuracies and false impressions.

[60] Santiago Rodríguez García, *El arte de las sedas valencianas en el siglo XVIII* (Valencia, 1959), p. 26.

[61] Lonchay, Cuvelier and Lefèvre, *Correspondance de la Cour d'Espagne sur les affaires des Pays-Bas au XVII^e siècle*, v, 257, 282.

[62] Hussey, *The Caracas Company*, pp. 8–34; José Muñoz Pérez, 'El comercio de las Indias bajo los Austrias y los tratadistas españoles del siglo XVII', *Revista de Indias*, xvii (1957), 209–21.

[63] See above, p. 278.

The most striking ideas came from the pen of Manuel de Lira, a cultivated and much travelled man who had spent some time in Holland. Lira was an official of independent views; as has been seen, he was Secretario del Despacho Universal from 1685 to 1691 when he left the administration in disgust at court intrigue and factionalism.[64] In 1690 the government appointed a junta to advise on the promotion of American trade, and subsequently asked Lira to comment on its report, which simply recommended rigid prohibition of trade with foreigners. Lira reacted sharply against the growing xenophobia, and he denounced prohibitive and unrealistic regulations and taxes. He argued that it was precisely the ban on trade with foreigners that induced the English, the Dutch and the French to establish settlements in the Indies. 'Excessive rigour has many disadvantages. I am convinced that it is better to govern with less absolutism.' It was one thing, he maintained, to prevent trade with enemies, another to prohibit trade with friendly foreigners. As an exponent of open trade and a critic of the Castilian monopoly, Lira advocated the formation of a commercial company at Seville or Cadiz; this would be open to all subjects of the crown and to the traders of England, the Low Countries, the Baltic ports, and other nations friendly or allied to Spain; to accommodate them they should be granted freedom of religion in Spanish ports. In addition to reviving and expanding American trade, which in turn would stimulate Spanish manufactures and merchant marine, Lira believed that his proposals would convert England and the United Provinces into firm allies, for they would have a stake in a vital sector of the Spanish economy and an interest in combating illicit trade.[65] Lira himself appreciated that his ideas had little chance of being accepted; and in fact they were not. Many of them would have simply legalised existing practice, and the government could not bring itself to do this. The proposal to admit foreigners to the American trade went far beyond the ideas of the time, including those of other nations. Even in 1765, when the government of Charles III began to reorganise colonial trade on the principles of *comercio libre*, it stopped short of admitting foreigners to the trade.

All of these schemes rose or fell in favour according to Spain's ability to defend her empire from foreign penetration. And they all failed. Shortage of capital, lack of confidence by foreign investors in Spanish officialdom, and the relentless opposition of the Seville *consulado* to any formal attack on its monopoly made failure inevitable. In any case the new promoters were

[64] See above, p. 273.

[65] Manuel Francisco de Lira y Castillo, 'Representación dirigida a Don Carlos II', in Juan Sempere y Guarinos, *Biblioteca Española Económico-Política* (4 vols., Madrid, 1801–1821), iv, 1–44; Antúñez y Acevedo, *Memorias históricas sobre la legislación y gobierno del comercio de los españoles con sus colonias en las Indias Occidentales*, p. 276.

attempting to copy the form of foreign trading systems without the substance; Spain did not possess the capital and industrial resources of her rivals. More than this, they missed the whole point of the crisis in colonial trade. They believed that it was sufficient to retrieve the trade from foreigners, whereas it was now the Americans themselves who absorbed most of the fruits of empire. Nevertheless it was only two decades later that the device of the chartered company was actually implemented and the Caracas Company was launched with Basque capital. The discussion had begun and the ground had been prepared in the reign of Charles II.

In the twilight of the Habsburg regime the balance sheet of progress was still unfavourable, in spite of the efforts of the precursors; and the mass of the Spanish people had little to show for the sacrifices demanded of them. After the fall of Oropesa in 1691 the reform movement begun in the 1670's lost its impetus; the political energies of the nation were now concentrated on the succession problem, and government virtually ceased to govern. The English ambassador reported in 1694, 'This country is in a most miserable condition; no head to govern, and every man in office does what he pleases, without fear of being called to account'.[66] For the common people the century ended as it had begun with living conditions hard and foodstuffs in short supply. In April 1699 there were bread riots in Madrid. A mob of 5,000 stormed through the town, frightened the grandees into hiding, and rampaged outside the royal palace. The prostrate king was forced to concede a change of corregidor, and to struggle from his sick-bed to appear in person before the mob with promise of redress. In May there were violent riots in Valladolid. Meanwhile peasants swarmed into the capital in search of food: 'We have an addition of above 20,000 beggars flocked from the country round, to share in that little there here is, who were starving at home, and look like ghosts'.[67] Scarcity of food reached famine proportions, and people fought like beasts over bread. It was a long haul out of the depression of the seventeenth century.

[66] Stanhope to Godolphin, 8 October 1694, in *Spain under Charles II; or Extracts from the Correspondence of the Hon. Alexander Stanhope, 1690–1699* (London, 1844), p. 53.

[67] Stanhope, 21 May 1699, *ibid.*, p. 138.

APPENDIX I

CURRENCY, WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Maravedí. The basic unit of account.

Real. Standard silver coin; equalled 34 *maravedís*; the *real de a ocho* equalled 272 *maravedís.*

Ducado, or ducat. Formerly a gold coin, now a unit of account; equalled 375 *maravedís.*

Escudo. Standard gold coin; from 1609 equalled 440 *maravedís.*

Peso. American treasure was expressed in *pesos*; equalled 450 *maravedis'* worth of gold and silver; equivalent to 42·29 grams of pure silver. For purposes of conversion it is equal to 1·2 ducats.

Vellón. A fractional coin, originally a mixture of silver and copper; by seventeenth-century pure copper.

Lliura. A Catalan pound; equalled 10 *reales*, or just under a ducat.

Libra. A weight, roughly a pound.

Arroba. Equalled 25 *libras.*

Quintal. Equalled 100 *libras.*

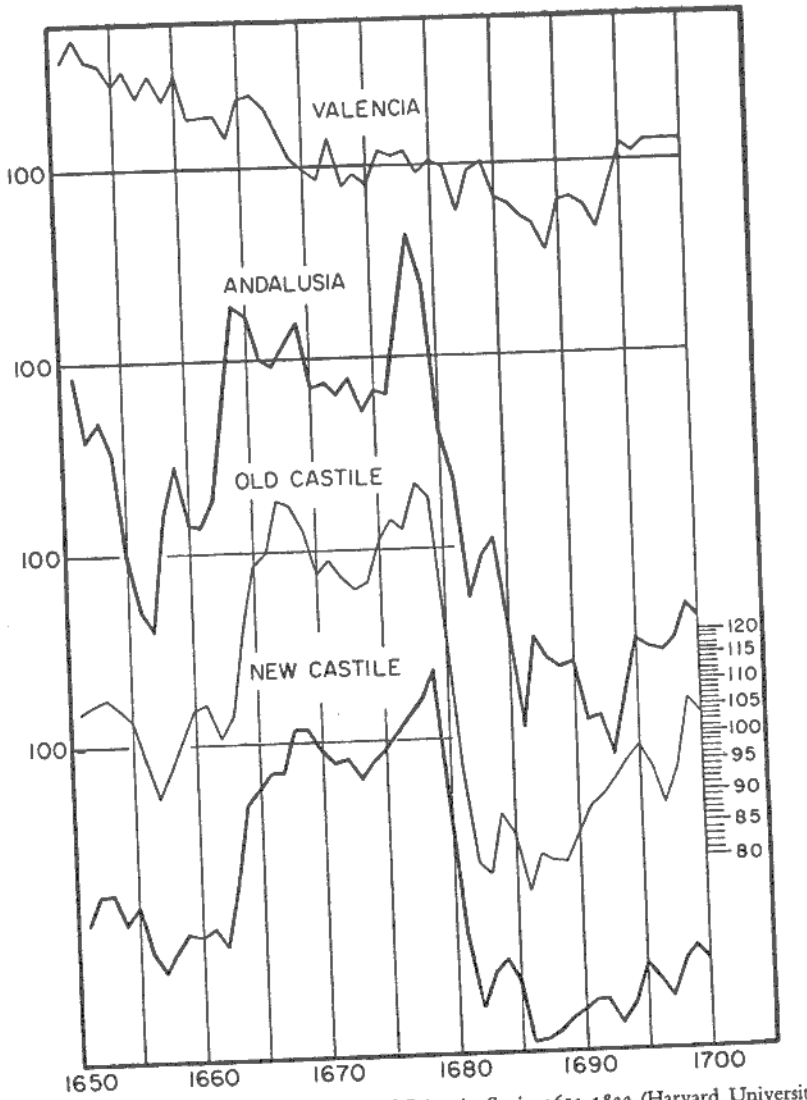
Fanega. A measure of bulk; equalled about 1·6 bushels. A *fanega* of cacao, however, was a weight; equalled about 116 *libras.*

Tonelada. Had different meanings at different dates. Chaunu has devised a conversion factor for reducing original data into a standard draft tonnage of 2·83 cubic metres.

APPENDIX II

TABLE A

INDEX NUMBERS OF COMMODITY PRICES, 1651–1700
Base = 1671–1680[1]



[1] Reprinted from E. J. Hamilton, *War and Prices in Spain 1651–1800* (Harvard University Press, 1947), p. 120.

TABLE B

THE INDIES TRADE, 1500–1650, AS SHOWN BY THE TONNAGE OF SHIPPING BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE PRINCIPAL REGIONS OF AMERICA [1]

[1] From P. Chaunu, *Séville et l'Atlantique* (S.E.V.P.E.N., 1957), vii, 68.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF RECENT WORKS

General

THE study of early modern Spain has advanced in a number of directions in the last fifteen years, not least in the field of social history, and it is fitting that Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, who has given so much to the subject in original research, should also have written distinguished works of synthesis. The first of these, *The Golden Age of Spain 1516–1659* (London, 1971), was a revelation to English readers, and was soon followed by a Spanish version, *Desde Carlos V a la Paz de los Pirineos 1517–1660* (Barcelona, 1974). Yet these have been surpassed by his *El Antiguo Régimen: los Reyes Católicos y los Austrias* (2nd ed., Madrid, 1974), which contains some notable passages on the urban sectors and on the crisis of the seventeenth century, and from which the specialist as well as the general reader will learn. The work of Bartolomé Bennassar, *The Spanish Character. Attitudes and Mentalities from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1979), is of a different kind, the reflections of a historian on the life of Spaniards at home, at prayer and at play, in which the archives themselves are made to speak.

From Golden Age to Depression

The reign of Ferdinand and Isabella still awaits its modern Prescott, though our knowledge is increased by the substantial work of L. Suárez Fernández and Juan de Mata Carriazo, *La España de los Reyes Católicos* (*Historia de España*, ed. R. Menéndez Pidal, 2 vols., Madrid, 1969), and that of Miguel Angel Ladero, *Castilla y la conquista del reino de Granada* (Valladolid, 1967).

Pierre Chaunu, *L'Espagne de Charles V* (2 vols., Paris, 1973) is a mine of information and ideas, and ranges well beyond the reign of Charles V. Manuel Fernández Alvarez, *Charles V. Elected Emperor and Hereditary Ruler* (London, 1975) studies Charles V as a continental ruler but appreciates his Spanish base. The revolt of the *comuneros*, its economic and social setting, its character and its meaning, are explored by Joseph Pérez, *La revolución de las Comunidades de Castilla (1520–1521)* (Madrid, 1977), a basic interpretation first published in French in 1970. The anti-feudal inspiration of the revolt is underlined by Juan Ignacio

Gutiérrez Nieto, *Las Comunidades como movimiento antiseñorial* (Barcelona, 1973), while the contemporary though unrelated movement in Valencia is the subject of Ricardo García Cárcel, *Las Germanías de Valencia* (Barcelona, 1975).

Philip II has a modern biography worthy of the subject by Geoffrey Parker, *Philip II* (London, 1979), a work of research and of revision. The history of Spain's Mediterranean front was not exhausted even by Braudel. A further sector and new sources have been uncovered by Andrew C. Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier. A History of the Sixteenth-Century Ibero-African Frontier* (Chicago, 1978), while the same author in 'The Moriscos: An Ottoman Fifth Column in Sixteenth-Century Spain', *American Historical Review*, 74, 1 (1968), 1–25, demonstrates the relations between moriscos and the Ottoman government, using Turkish sources for the first time. To transfer troops from the Mediterranean to the Netherlands was a problem of logistics as well as of policy, and this aspect of Spain's war effort in northern Europe has been dealt with by Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567–1659* (Cambridge, 1972). The same author has written a new history of the revolt of the Netherlands, *The Dutch Revolt* (London, 1977). He has also placed the revolt in the context of Spain's wider problems in *Spain and the Netherlands, 1559–1659* (London, 1979); here he questions the correlation supposed by Chaunu between the rise and fall of American treasure receipts and the advance and retreat of the Spanish cause in the Netherlands, and he concludes that there was no discernible reduction in the provisions sent to the Low Countries before 1642–43, when it was the revolt of the Catalans rather than the exhaustion of Castile which caused resources to be diverted from the north.

Spain's policy in northern Europe and determination to establish her sea power between the peninsula and the Netherlands and beyond into the Baltic are studied in detail and in a sense made more credible by José Alcalá-Zamora y Queipo de Llano, *España, Flandes y el Mar del Norte (1618–1639)* (Barcelona, 1975). Peter Brightwell takes an expert look at the options open to Spain in the Netherlands in 'The Spanish System and the Twelve Years' Truce', *English Historical Review*, 89, 350 (1974), 270–92, and concludes that the decision to renew the war in 1621 was neither rash nor unreasoned. J. I. Israel, 'A Conflict of Empires: Spain and the Netherlands 1618–1648', *Past and Present*, 76 (1977), 34–74, places Spanish policy towards the Netherlands in a wider imperial context. Olivares and his Spain will be given their due history by J. H. Elliott, author of *Imperial Spain 1469–1716* (Pelican edition, London, 1970). Meanwhile the student of the period is well served by *Memoriales y Cartas del Conde Duque de Olivares. Tomo 1. Política Interior: 1621 a 1627*, ed. John H. Elliott and José F. de la Peña (Madrid, 1978).

The reign of Charles II is now immeasurably better known thanks to the pioneering work of Henry Kamen, *Spain in the Later Seventeenth Century 1665–1700* (London, 1980), which brings order out of confusion and fills the void between the Golden Age and the Enlightenment. The story which he tells is not one of decline but of recovery from the mid-century depression; population growth, industrial development in the periphery, agricultural expansion in Castile, and a return to better days in the American trade, these were the signs of a sure if slow revival. Some of these views were anticipated in the same author's study 'The Decline of Spain: A Historical Myth?', *Past and Present*, 81 (1978), 24–50, where he prefers to speak not of decline but of increased dependency and underdevelopment. The argument is part of a renewed interest in Spain's great depression, in which historians have sought to clarify the data and refine their analysis. Students and experts alike will profit from the following: J. H. Elliott, 'Self-Perception and Decline in Early Seventeenth-Century Spain', *Past and Present*, 74 (1977), 41–61; Charles Jago, 'The "Crisis of the Aristocracy" in Seventeenth-Century Castile', *Past and Present*, 84 (1979), 60–90, R. A. Stradling, 'Seventeenth Century Spain: Decline or Survival?', *European Studies Review*, 9, 2 (1979), 157–94, and items by Israel and TePaske mentioned below.

Economy and Society

Population figures, now firmly based, can be found in the appropriate chapters of Jordi Nadal, *La población española (siglos xvi a xx)* (3rd ed., Barcelona, 1973), the standard work. On the epidemic disaster of 1596–1602 more specific data and analysis than were hitherto available are to be found in Bartolomé Bennassar, *Recherches sur les grandes épidémies dans le Nord de l'Espagne à la fin du XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1969). For a history of the moriscos, with a more precise estimate of their numbers, see Antonio Domínguez Ortiz and Bernard Vincent, *Historia de los moriscos* (Madrid, 1978), which sums up the results of research since the work of Halperin Donghi, Caro Baroja and Lapeyre in the 1950s and adds new data of its own.

The researches of Antonio Domínguez Ortiz on Spanish Society in the seventeenth century, *La sociedad española en el siglo XVII* (2 vols., Madrid, 1963–70) are basic to the subject, and students will find a useful concise version in *Las clases privilegiadas en la España del Antiguo Régimen* (Madrid, 1973). Charles Jago, 'The Influence of Debt on the Relations

between Crown and Aristocracy in Seventeenth-Century Castile', *Economic History Review*, 26 (1973), 218–36, studies the aristocracy's service to and rewards from the crown. The subject of Richard L. Kagan, *Students and Society in Early Modern Spain* (Baltimore, 1974) is the university system of Habsburg Spain, its rôle in society, its response to the demands of the state; the author shows that in late sixteenth-century Castile there were 20,000 university students in a population of 6.9 million, and about 3.2 per cent of all males aged 15 to 24 attended university each year, a high level in contemporary Europe and a reserve of recruits for an imperial bureaucracy.

The trend towards regional studies has brought new areas of knowledge into economic and social history. Bartolomé Bennassar, *Valladolid au Siècle d'Or* (Paris, 1967) led the way with a total study of life and work in this important area of Old Castile in the sixteenth century. A rare study of an industrial centre has been undertaken by Angel García Sanz, *Desarrollo y crisis del Antiguo Régimen en Castilla la Vieja. Economía y sociedad en tierras de Segovia, 1500–1814* (Madrid, 1977), while the regional history of New Castile is well served by Carla Rahn Phillips, *Ciudad Real, 1500–1750: Growth, Crisis, and Readjustment in the Spanish Economy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979). The society of Seville, centre of a regional economy and gateway to an empire, has been studied in two works by Ruth Pike, *Enterprise and Adventure. The Genoese in Seville and the Opening of the New World* (Ithaca, 1966), and *Aristocrats and Traders: Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca, 1972). The *Historia de Sevilla* edited by Francisco Morales Padrón has two admirable volumes for the early modern period, *La Ciudad del Quinientos* (Seville, 1977) by the editor himself, and *El Barroco y la Ilustración* (Seville, 1976) by Antonio Domínguez Ortiz and Francisco Aguilar Piñal. Modern historiography has also been at work on eastern Spain. James Casey, *The Kingdom of Valencia in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1979) shows in masterly fashion that the revival of Valencia after the expulsion of the moriscos and other adversities was slow and incomplete. Two works by Sebastian García Martínez deal with problems of law and order in their social context: *Bandolerismo, piratería y control de moriscos en Valencia durante el reinado de Felipe II* (Valencia, 1977), and *Valencia bajo Carlos II: Bandolerismo, revindicaciones agrarias y servicios a la monarquía* (Valencia, 1974). The neighbouring province of Murcia has been placed on the map of Spanish history by Francisco Chacón in his recent researches on the province; like James Casey he finds little evidence of any revival in the seventeenth century. Catalonia perhaps offers a different example, and Pere Molas, *Comerçi*

estructura social a Catalunya i Valencia als segles XVII i XVIII (Barcelona, 1977), continues the search begun by Pierre Vilar for the origins of Catalan development.

Government and Administration

The institutions of Habsburg Spain were paradoxically neglected by traditional history, and we still await monographic studies of the cortes, the *corregidores*, and the municipalities, not to mention a number of the councils. Fortunately progress has recently been made in some areas of government. I. A. A. Thompson, *War and Government in Habsburg Spain* (London, 1976) detects, between 1560 and 1620, a steady retreat from the attempts of Philip II to nationalise military industries and their administration; under pressure of war, and its cost, his successors had to concede their private ownership. While the presence of the state was receding in one direction, in other respects absolute monarchy was increasing its effectiveness. The office of secretary is the subject of a large history by José Antonio Escudero, *Los Secretarios de Estado y del Despacho (1474–1724)* (4 vols., Madrid, 1969). A. W. Lovett, *Philip II and Mateo Vázquez de Leca: the Government of Spain (1572–1592)* (Geneva, 1977) not only increases our knowledge of the working of the bureaucracy, financial administration and the new juntas, but also shows the development of policy during the secretaryship of Mateo Vázquez. Spanish financial administration under Philip II is described in detail by Modesto Ulloa, *La Hacienda Real de Castilla en el reinado de Felipe II* (2nd ed., Madrid, 1977). Political and social ideas have a perceptive historian in José Antonio Maravall, *Estado moderno y mentalidad social (siglos XV a XVII)* (2 vols., Madrid, 1972).

Religion

The ecclesiastical history of Spain in the early modern period has not made fundamental advance in the last fifteen years, though particular aspects have been well studied. The religious policy of the Catholic Monarchs is a particular concern of Tarsicio de Azcona, *Isabel la Católica* (Madrid, 1964). Relations between church and state under Philip II have been described in more detail by J. I. Tellechea Idígoras, *El arzobispo Carranza y su tiempo* (Madrid, 1968) and José Luis Novalín, *El Inquisidor General Fernando de Valdés* (Oviedo, 1968). For a useful work of reference see *Diccionario de Historia Eclesiástica de España*, ed. Q. Aldea, T. Marín and J. Vives (4 vols., Madrid, 1972).

The study of the Spanish Inquisition has been transformed in recent

years. The starting point is Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition* (London, 1965), which places the subject in a firmer structural and historical framework than hitherto. The two books of Ricardo García Cárcel, *Orígenes de la Inquisición española. El tribunal de Valencia, 1478–1530* (Barcelona, 1976) and *Herejía y sociedad en el siglo XVI. La Inquisición en Valencia 1530–1609* (Barcelona, 1980) are the fruit of basic new research into the religious, institutional, economic and social history of the Inquisition, and bring an element of measurement into the study of a particular tribunal. These are also the qualities, on a different scale, of the work of Bartolomé Bennassar, *L'Inquisition espagnole (xv^e–xix^e siècle)* (Paris, 1979).

Spanish America

Conquest and empire in the context of intellectual history is the subject of J. H. Elliott, *The Old World and the New 1492–1650* (Cambridge, 1970), which brings new understanding of the ideas involved in the European discovery of America and the American discovery of Europe. It is still difficult to measure precisely Spanish emigration to America in the early modern period, but the discussion of sources and methods is brought expertly up to date by Magnus Mörner, 'La emigración española al Nuevo Mundo antes de 1810. Un informe del estado de la investigación', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, 32 (1975), 43–131. The regional distribution of migration is established by Peter Boyd-Bowman, 'Patterns of Spanish Emigration to the Indies until 1600', *HAHR*, 56, 4 (1976), 580–604. Trade between Spain and America is known in great detail up to 1650, thanks to the work of Chaunu, and from 1717 (with a backward glance to 1680) in the more recent work of Antonio García-Baquero González, *Cádiz y el Atlántico (1717–1778)* (2 vols., Seville, 1976). The gap between these dates is now beginning to be filled, with positive results and suggestions even that collapse may have been followed by revival in the last decades of the seventeenth century. Firmer quantities were first suggested by Michel Morineau, 'D'Amsterdam à Séville: De quelle réalité l'histoire des prix est'elle le miroir?', *Annales*, 23, 1 (1968), 178–205, and 'Gazettes hollandaises et trèsors americaines', *Anuario de Historia Económica y Social*, 2 (1969), 289–361, 3 (1970), 139–209. Further evidence was supplied by John Everaert, 'Le commerce colonial de la "Nation Flamande" à Cadix sous Charles II (Ca. 1670–1700)', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, 28 (1971), 139–51. These estimates are based mainly on foreign and non-official sources. Results from the Spanish sources for the period after 1650 are now available through the meticulous research of Lutgardo García

Fuentes, *El comercio español con América, 1650–1700* (Seville, 1980), a work which describes, measures and analyses the Indies trade, its shipping and tonnage, exports, imports and bullion returns. The author argues in favour of an upward turn from the 1670's, although the official sources and his own statistics appear to confirm the existence of a dominant downward trend throughout the period. For a further judgement see A. García-Baquero González, 'Andalucía y los problemas de la carrera de Indias en la crisis del siglo XVII', Coloquio de Historia de Andalucía, 1980.

Demographic history takes a major step forward in the work of Sherburne F. Cook and Woodrow Borah, *Essays in Population History* (3 vols., Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1974–79). The authors return to the problem of Indian population figures, on the basis of previous totals established for Central Mexico: 1518, 25·2 million; 1532, 16·8; 1568, 2·65; 1605, 1·075. They now take the discussion a stage further by considering various dates and estimates recently made by historians for the low point of Indian population in the seventeenth century, especially the date 1650 and the figure of under 1 million. From a revenue list of 1646 they compute a total of 702,929, and place the low point in 1620–25, when the Indian population of Central Mexico was approximately 3 per cent. of its size at the time the Europeans first landed. See *Essays*, iii, 1–102.

The colonial mining industry has emerged into the light of history in recent years. P. J. Bakewell, *Silver Mining and Society in Colonial Mexico: Zacatecas 1546–1700* (Cambridge, 1971) established new frontiers of knowledge and a new chronology of crisis in the seventeenth century. D. A. Brading and Harry E. Cross, 'Colonial Silver Mining: Mexico and Peru', *HAHR*, 52 4 (1972), 545–79, is an essay in comparative mining history and also suggests a new chronology of mining cycles. Knowledge of colonial Mexico has also been advanced by regional studies; see particularly William B. Taylor, *Landlord and Peasant in Colonial Oaxaca* (Stanford, 1972), and the same author's *Drinking, Homicide, and Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages* (Stanford, 1979). New research on the social structure of seventeenth-century Mexico and its significance for the imperial bureaucracy is contributed by J. I. Israel, *Race, Class and Politics in Colonial Mexico* (Oxford, 1975), and the same author participates in a more general debate with his 'Mexico and the General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century', *Past and Present*, 63 (1974), 33–57. He argues that there was a prolonged Mexican depression after 1620, in mining, inter-colonial trade, and industry, and that sustained tax returns were an index not of

economic activity but of increased fiscal pressure from Spain, accompanied by a campaign against corruption; all this led to political conflict in seventeenth-century Mexico, and in particular to a rift between officials and colonists in 1620–64. Evidence for depression in another colony is provided by Murdo J. MacLeod, *Spanish Central America. A Socioeconomic History, 1520–1720* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1973), forgotten by Spain perhaps but, after this, not by historians.

Seventeenth-century Peru is also difficult to assess; there, as in Mexico, signs of promise and of prejudice existed side by side. The mining industry underwent slow rather than catastrophic recession. Peter J. Bakewell has again accomplished important work of measurement, 'Registered Silver Production in the Potosí District, 1550–1735', *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas*, 12 (1975), 67–103; see also his *Antonio López de Quiroga (industrial minero del Potosí colonial)* (Potosí, 1973). The society of Upper Peru has been studied in a work of research and rare perception by Josep M. Barnadas, *Charcas. Orígenes históricos de una sociedad colonial* (La Paz, 1973). The agrarian history of colonial Peru is very much clarified by Robert G. Keith, *Conquest and Agrarian Change: the Emergence of the Hacienda System on the Peruvian Coast* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976). Peru, too, is part of the evidence for or against the existence of an absolute depression in Spanish America in the seventeenth century, and perhaps of a general crisis in the Hispanic world. Recent quantitative research appears to support the idea of change rather than depression, and to suggest a later date for this: John J. TePaske and Herbert S. Klein, 'The Seventeenth Century Depression in the Spanish Empire: Myth or Reality' (Paper presented to the American Historical Association, 1976). To cite only their evidence from Peru: total income recorded at the Lima treasury office, 1600–90, shows that income levels remained relatively stable until 1664, when serious recession began; annual revenues ranged between 2 and 4 million ducats, with cyclical fluctuations; from 1664 income began an uneven descent lasting into the eighteenth century. No doubt the discussion will continue. Meanwhile historians can now take account of yet another colony whose early modern history has been re-written from the archives: Germán Colmenares, *Historia económica y social de Colombia, 1537–1719* (2nd ed., Medellín, 1975).

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Guides to works used and to further reading are provided in the footnotes of each chapter and in the Bibliography of Recent Works. The following index contains the names of authors. The number after a name refers to the page where, in a footnote, the author's work is first mentioned and given full citation. Where the entry is followed by two or more numbers, these refer to other works by the same author. There are three indispensable bibliographies of Spanish and Spanish-American history: B. Sánchez Alonso, *Fuentes de la historia española e hispano americana* (3rd ed., 3 vols., Madrid, 1952); *Indice histórico español*, Universidad de Barcelona, Centro de Estudios Históricos Internacionales (Barcelona, 1953–); and *Handbook of Latin American Studies* (Harvard University Press, 1936–50, University of Florida Press, 1951–).

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